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Stan Lee PROUDLY PRESENTS A COMIC BOOK MILESTONE: THE FABULOUS 300TH ISSUE OF...

THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN®

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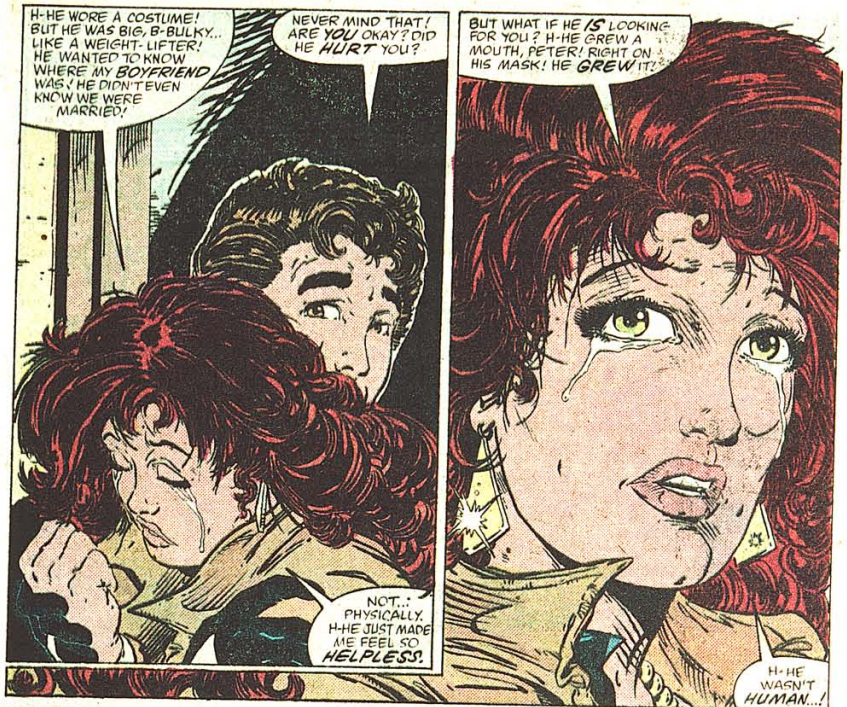

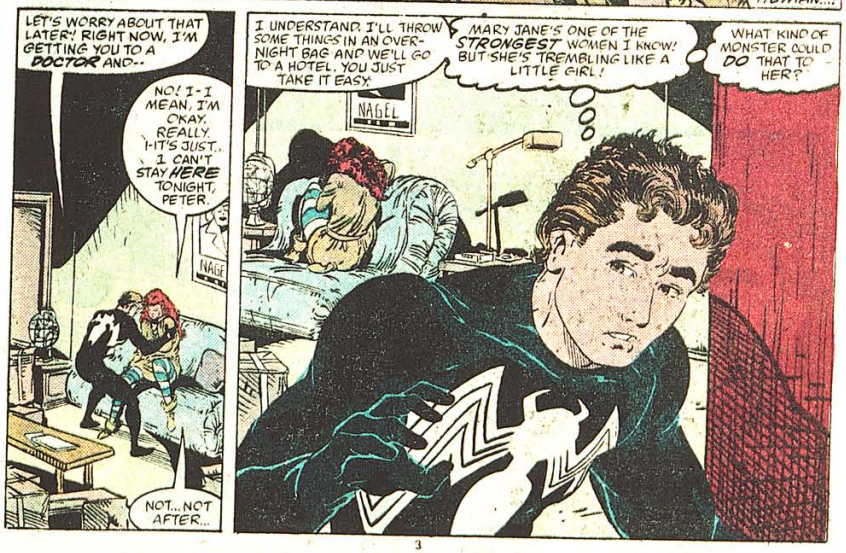

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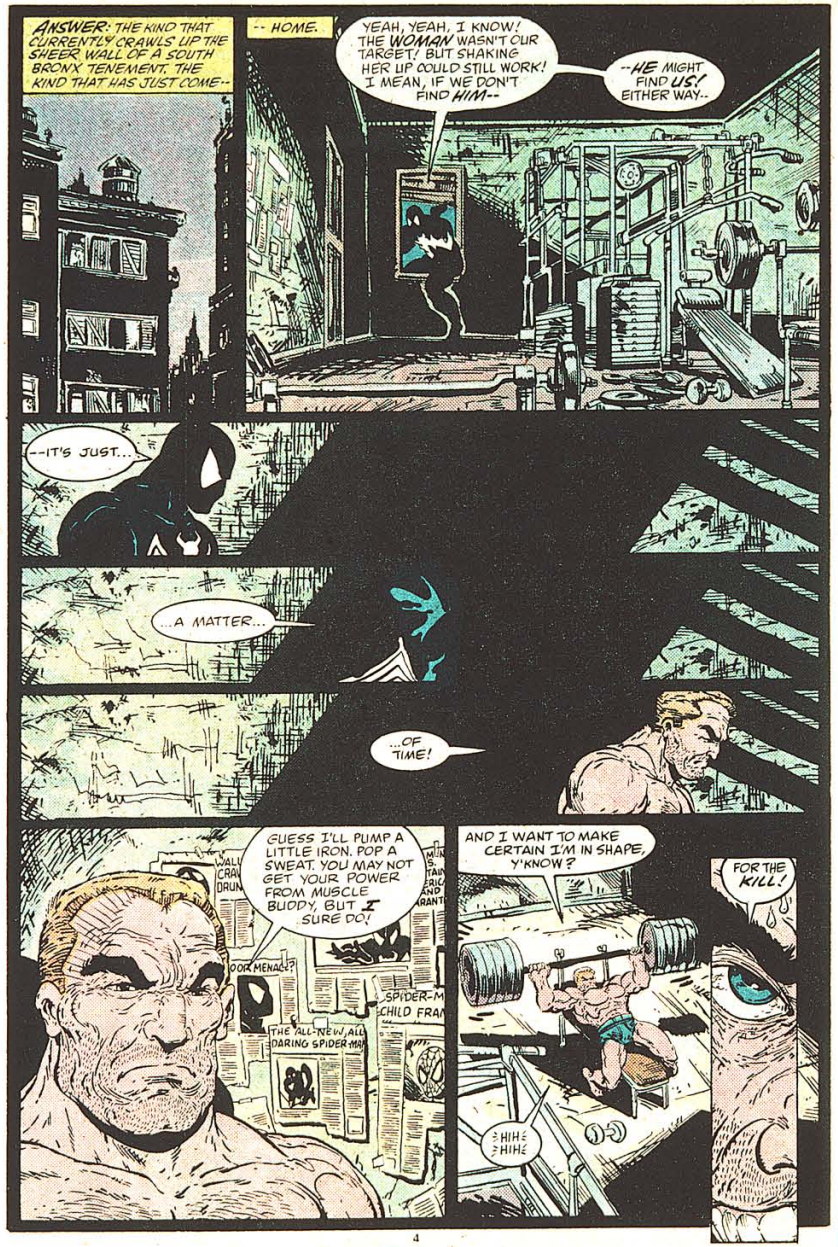

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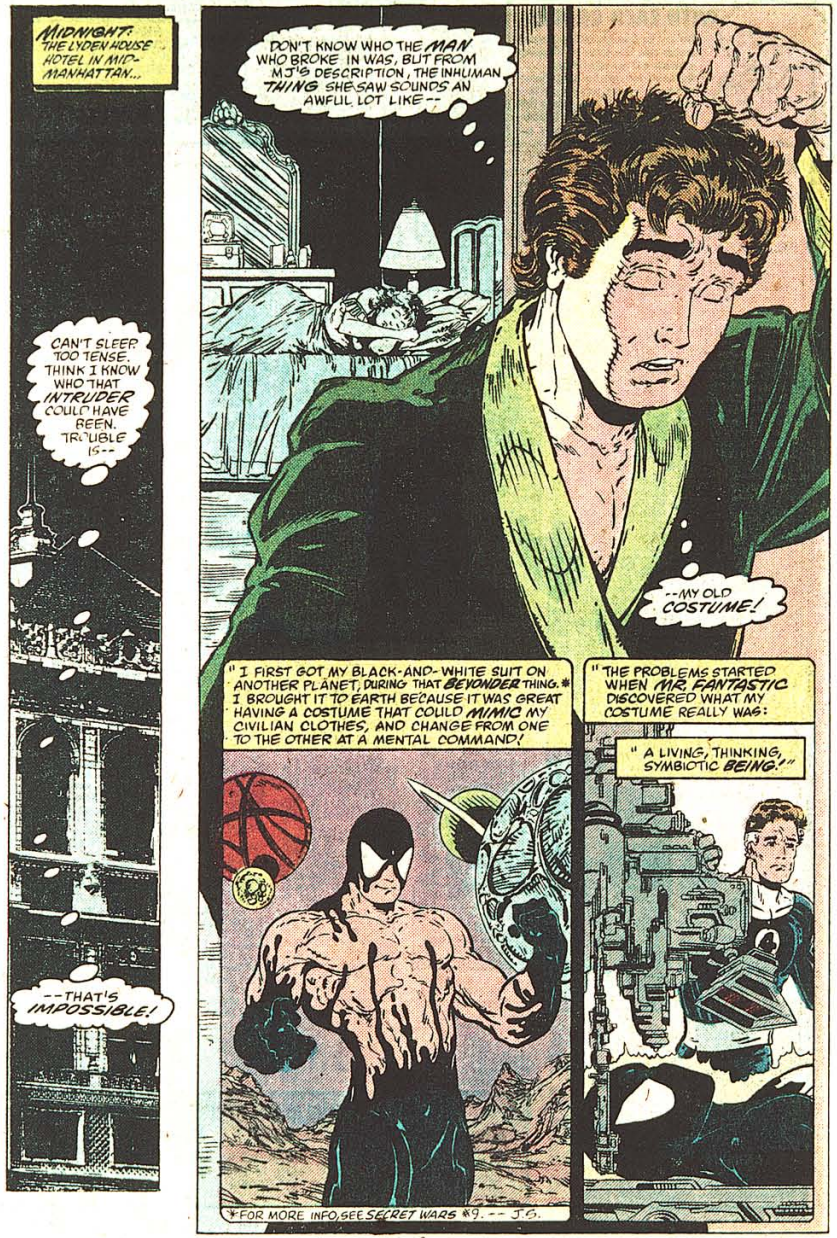

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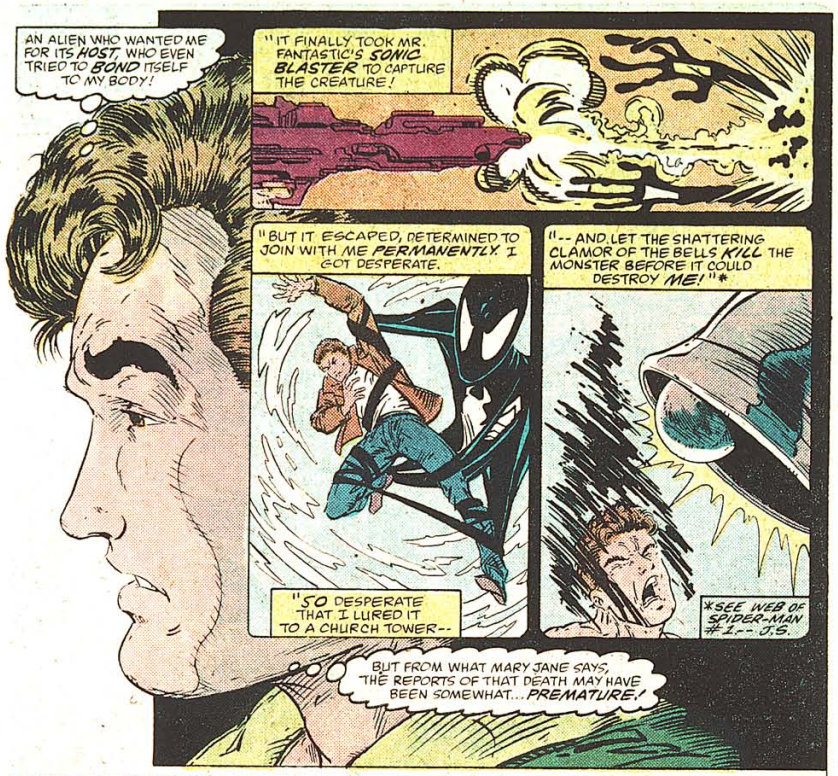

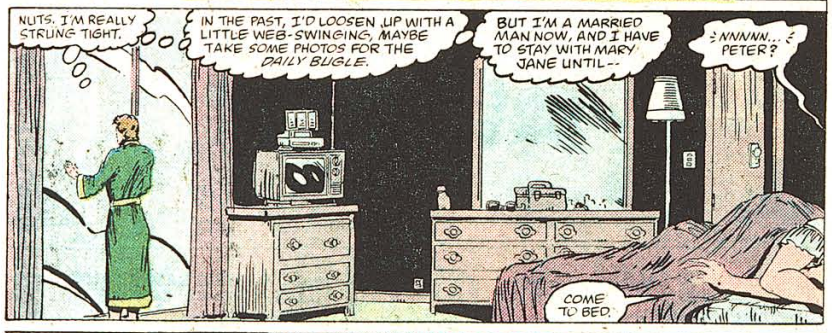

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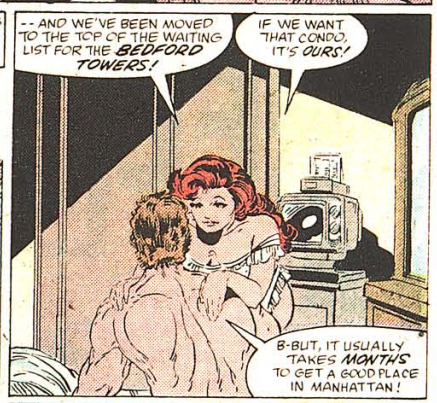

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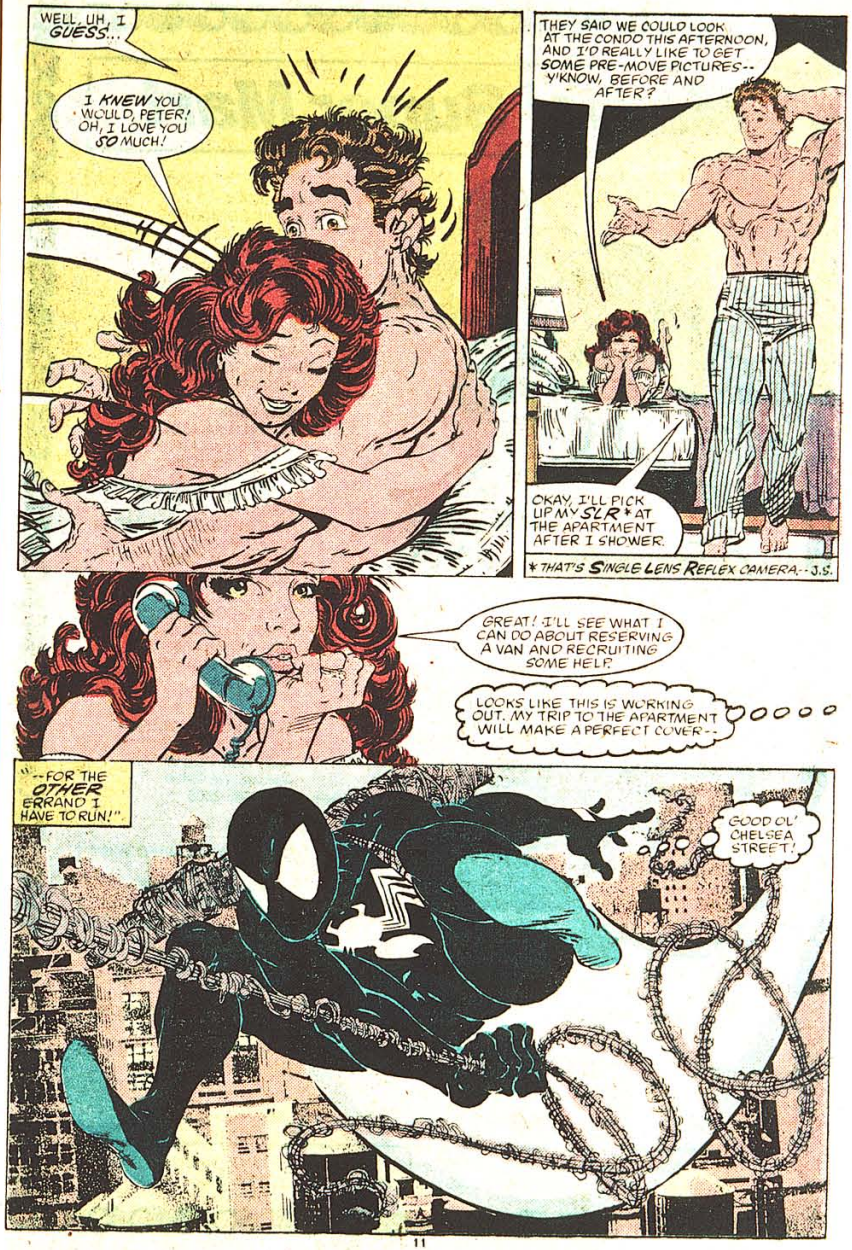

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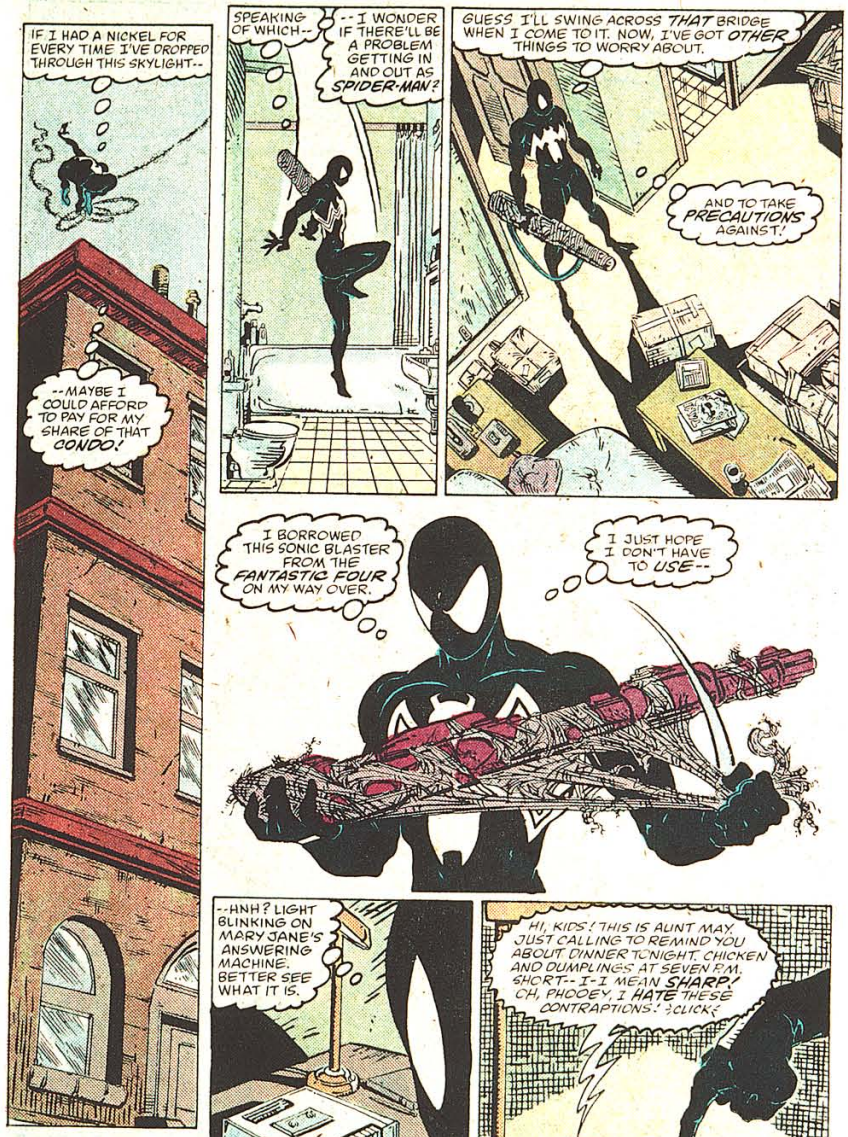

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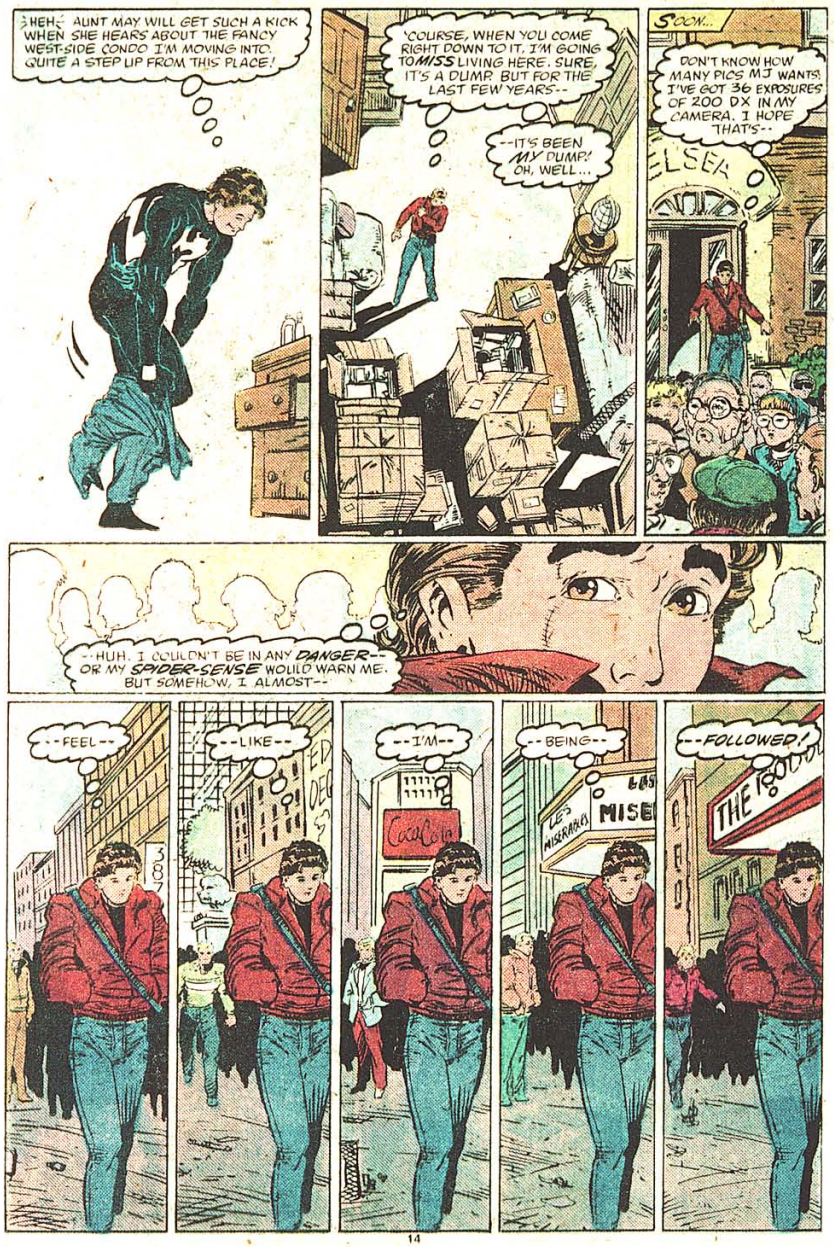

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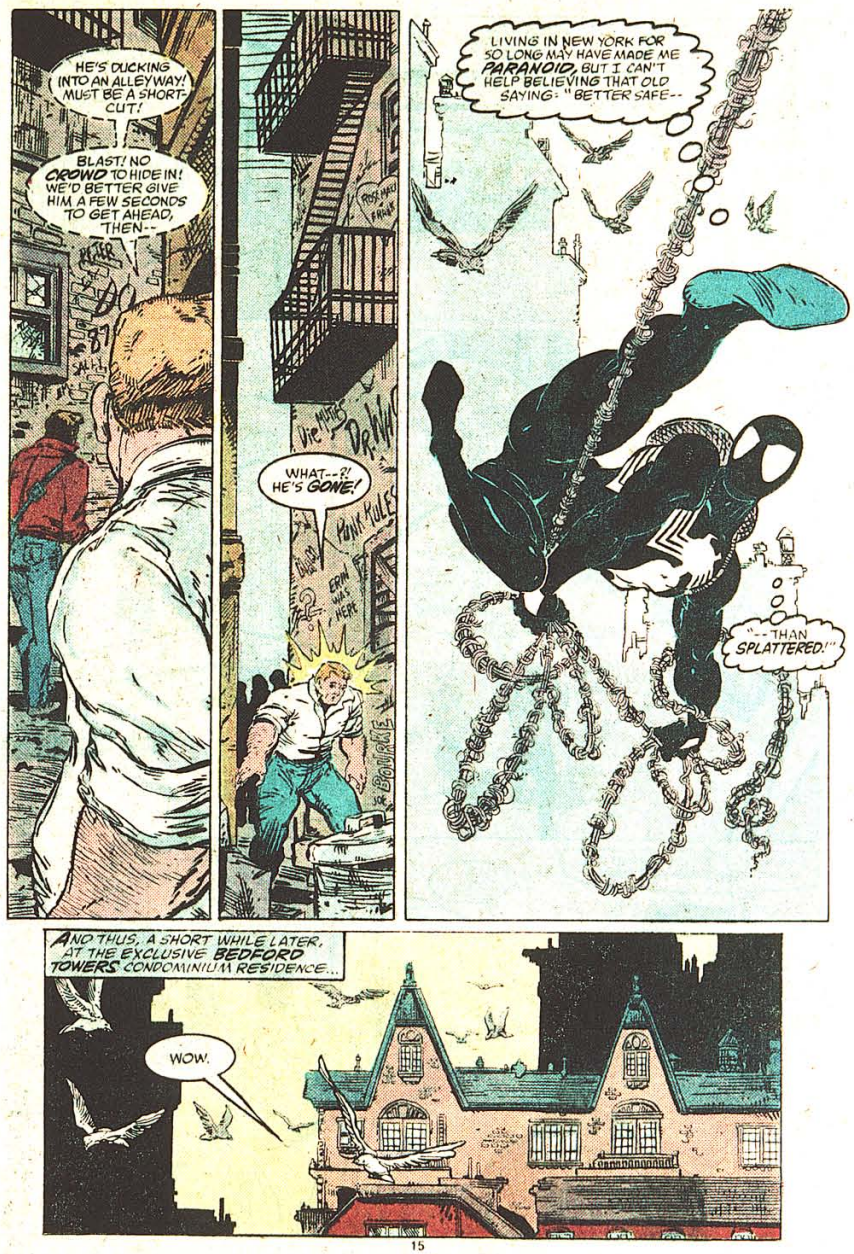

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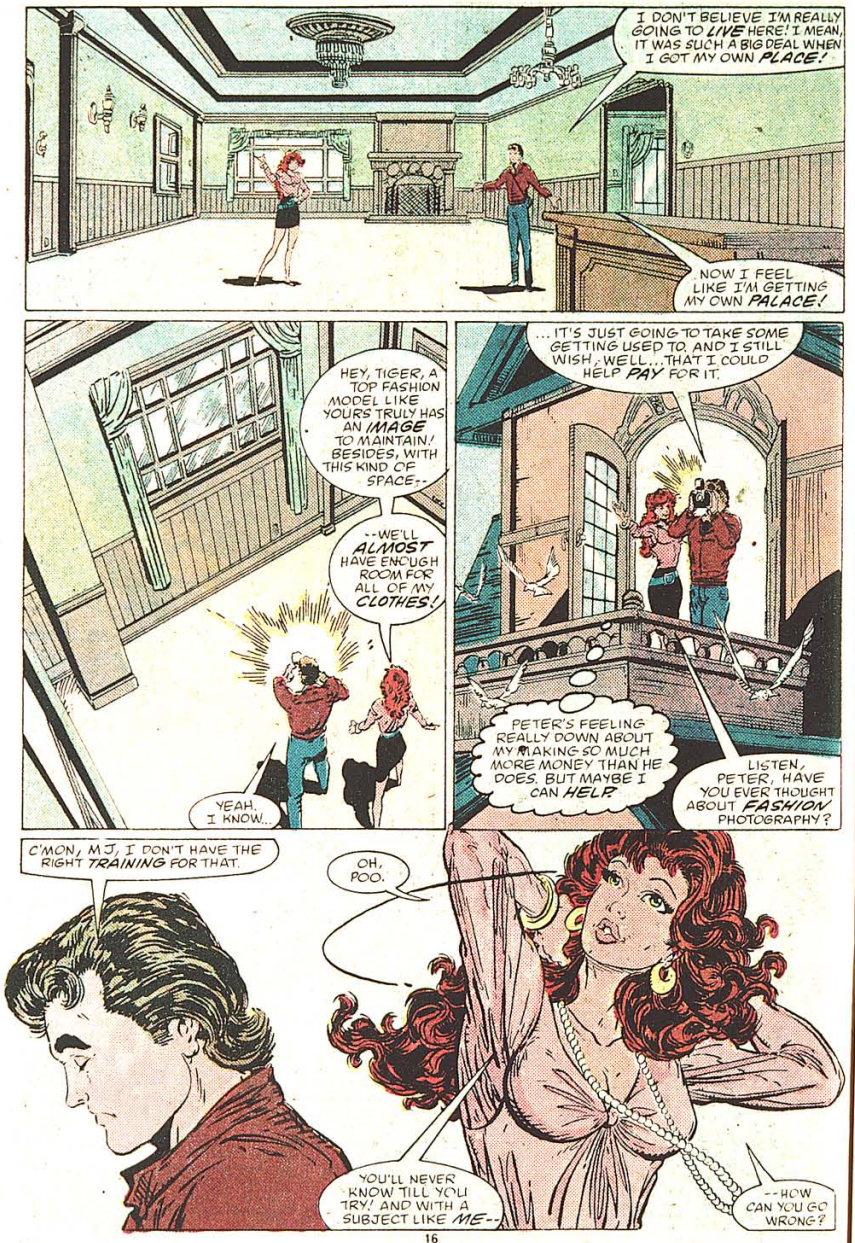

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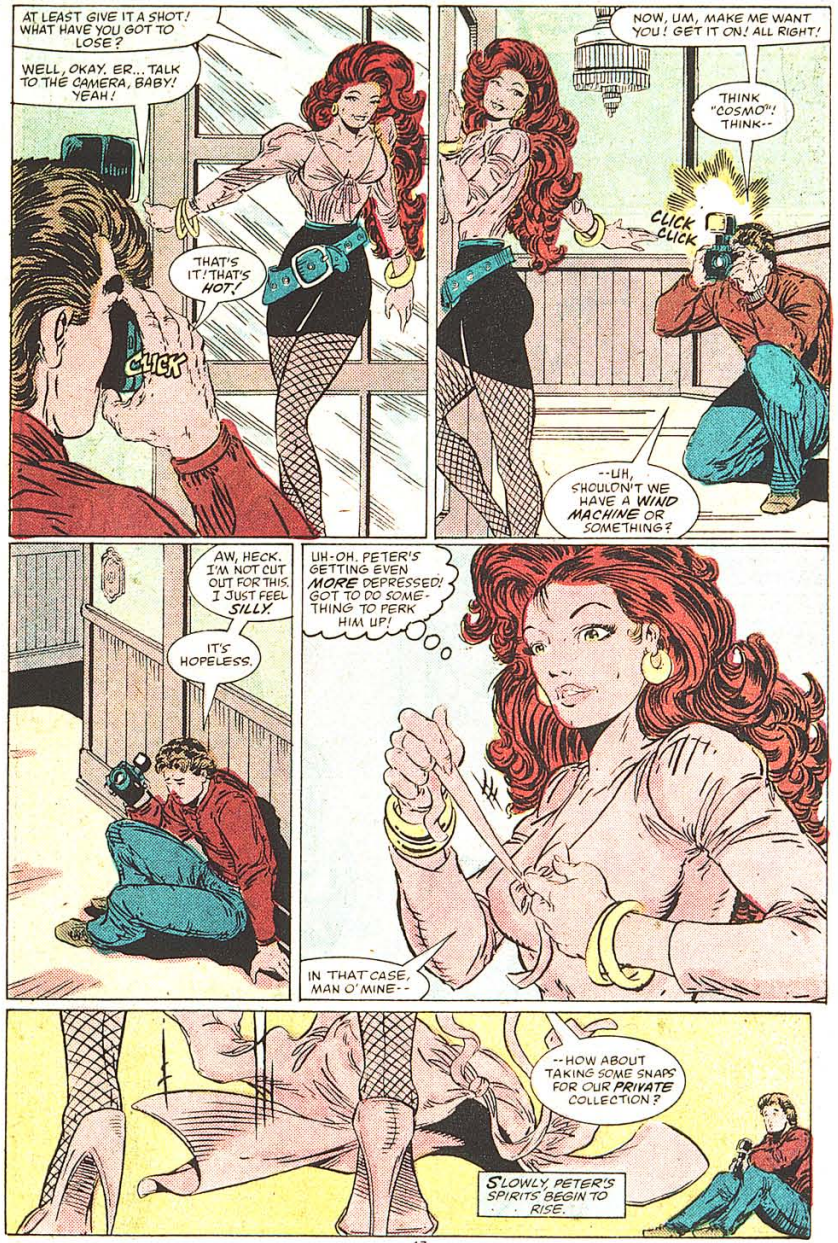

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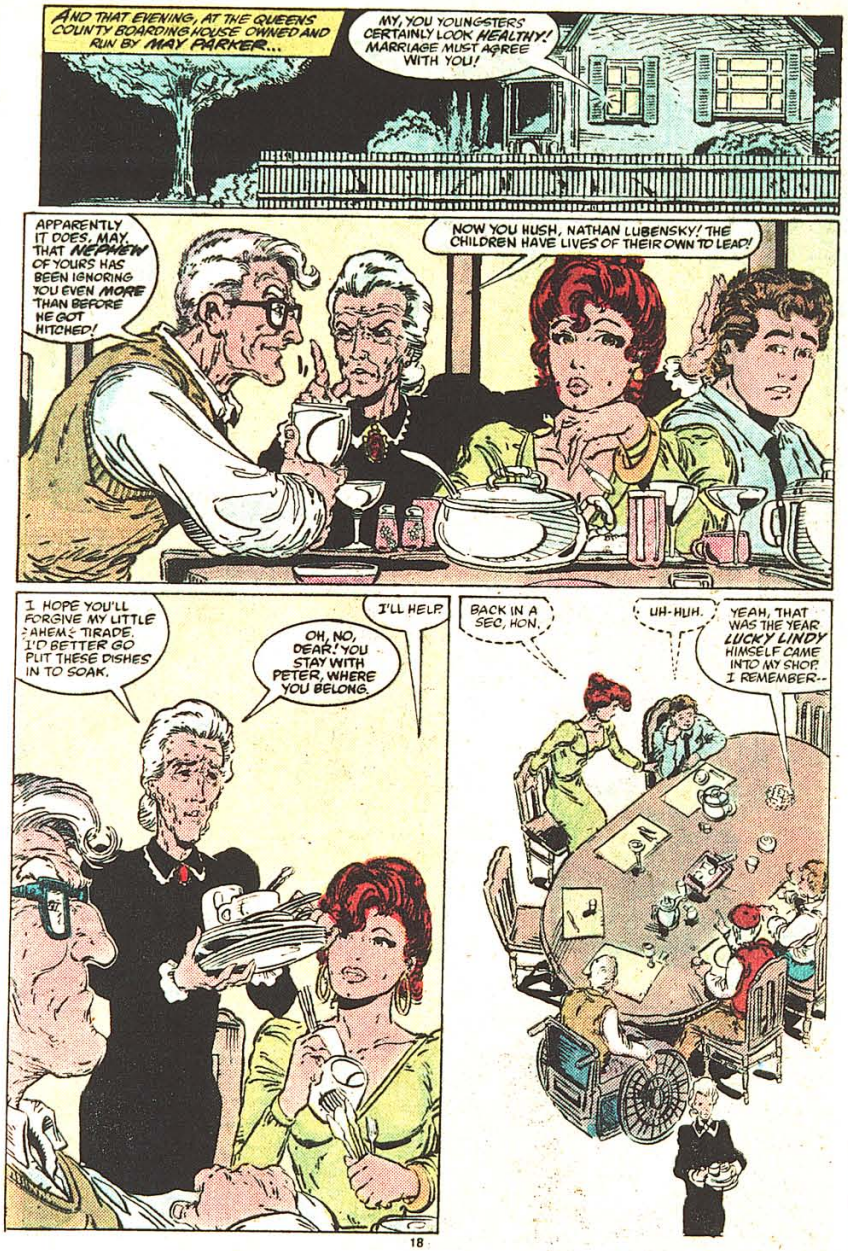

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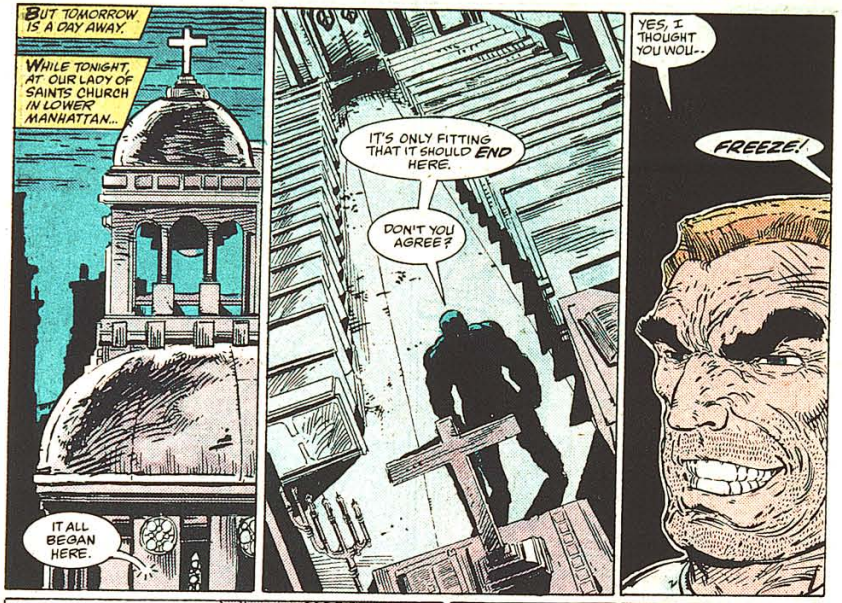

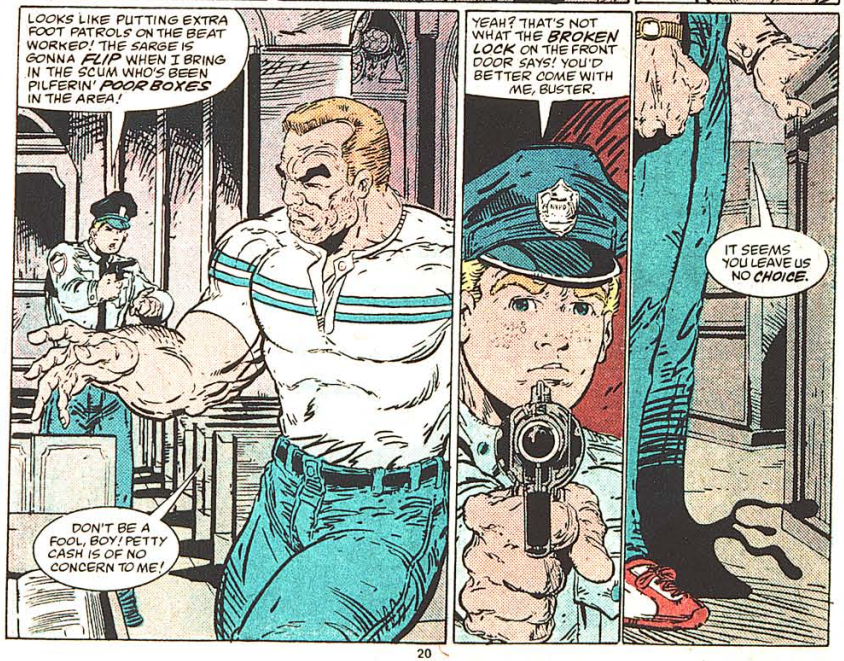

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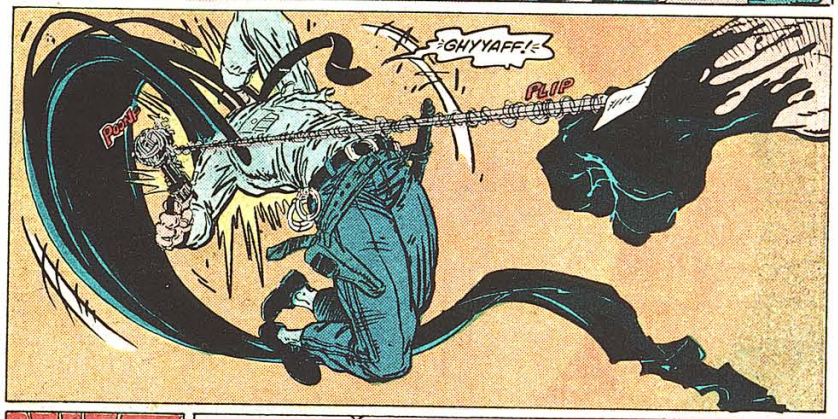

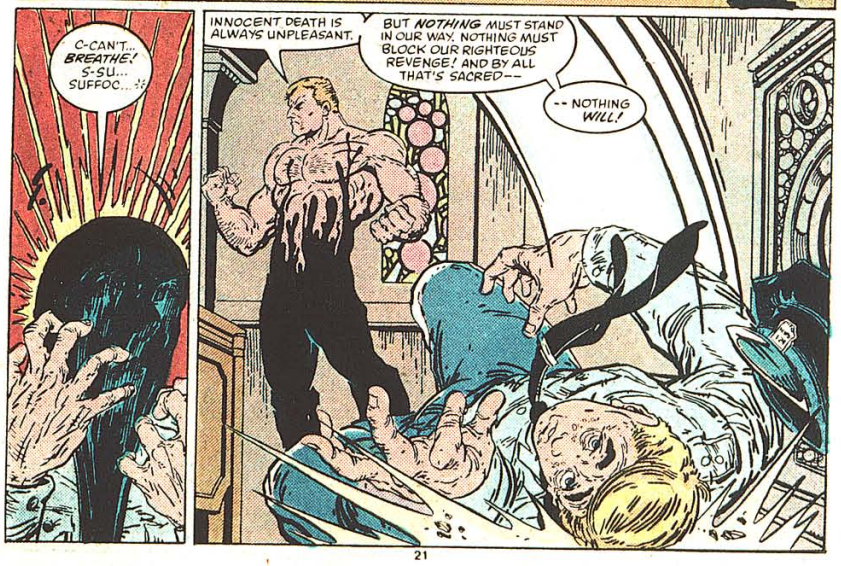

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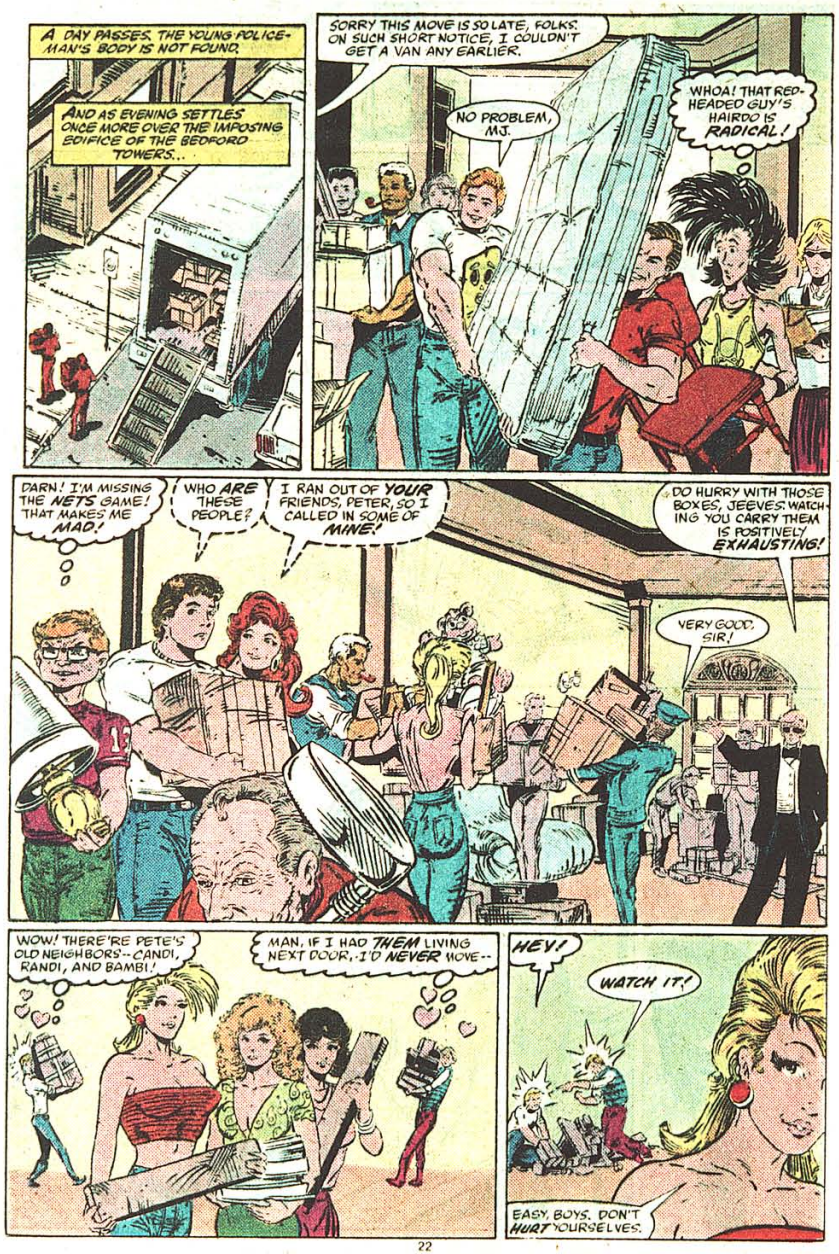

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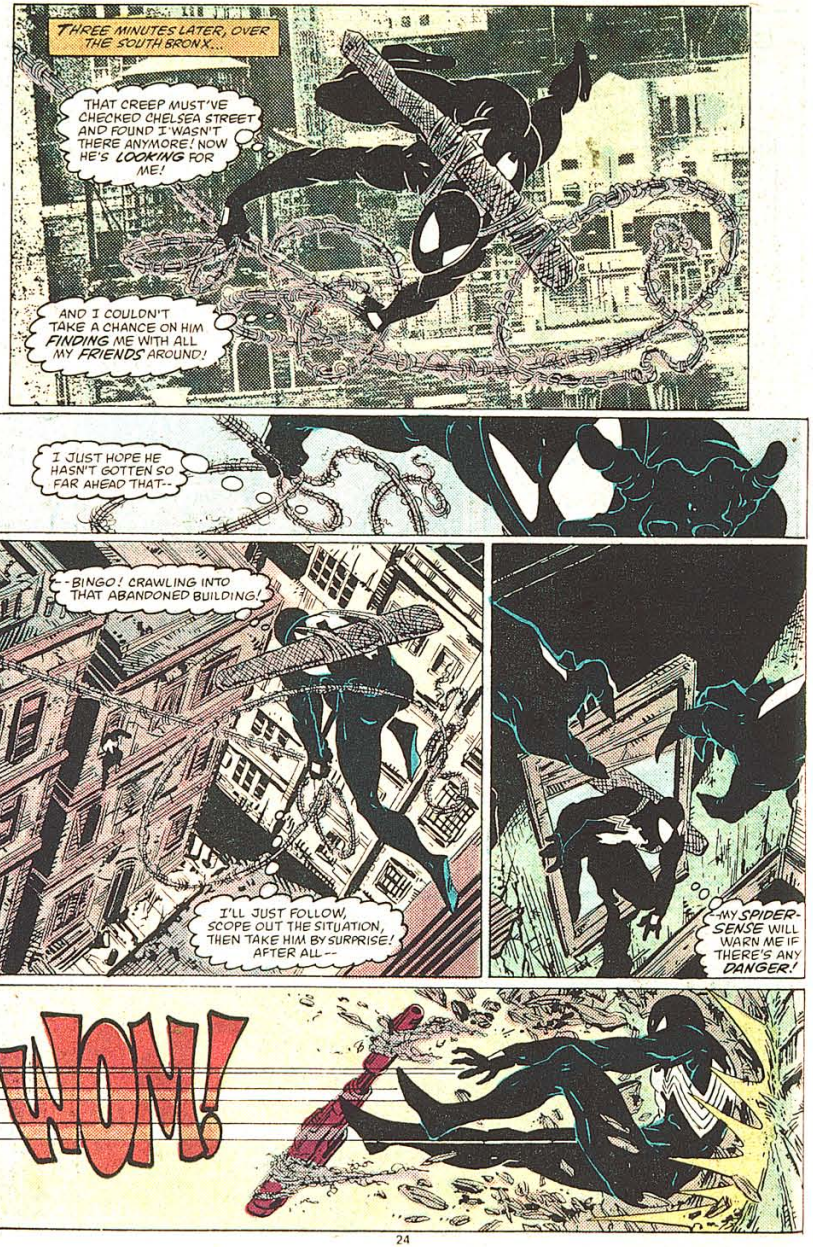

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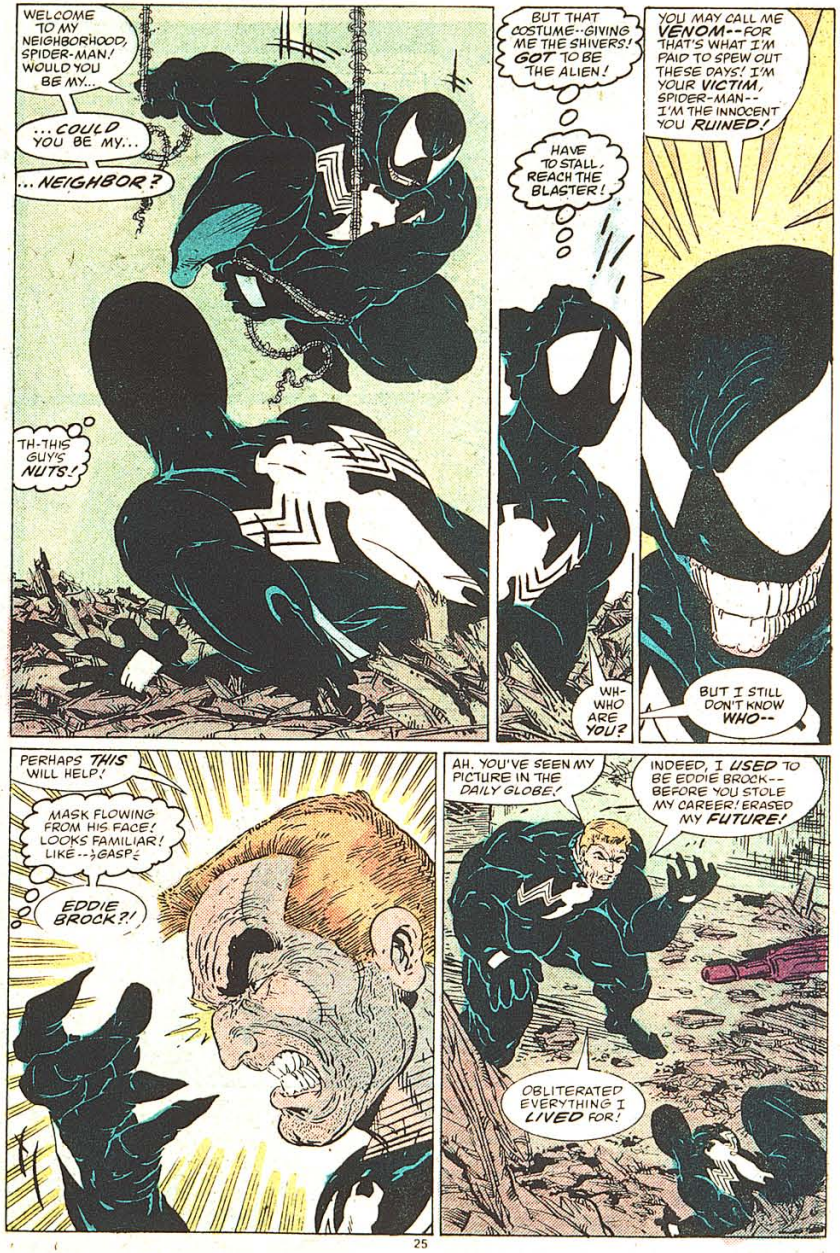

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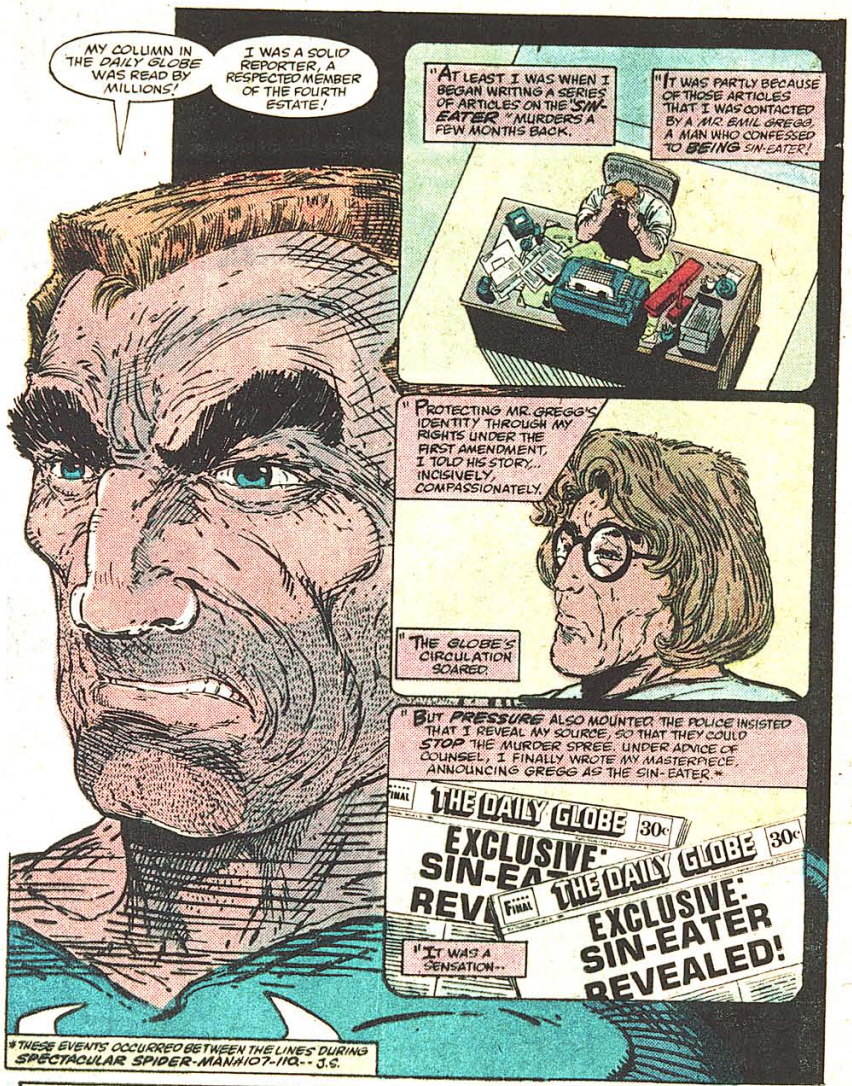

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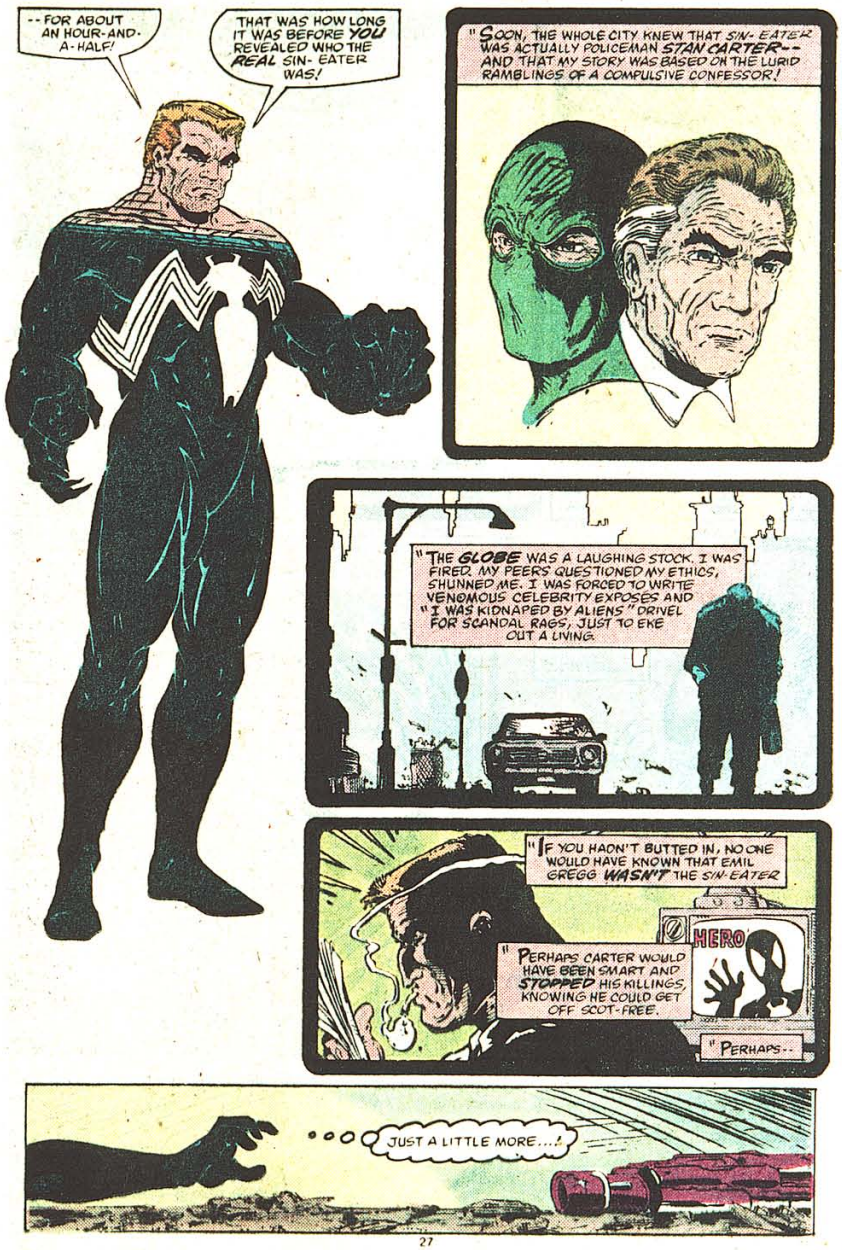

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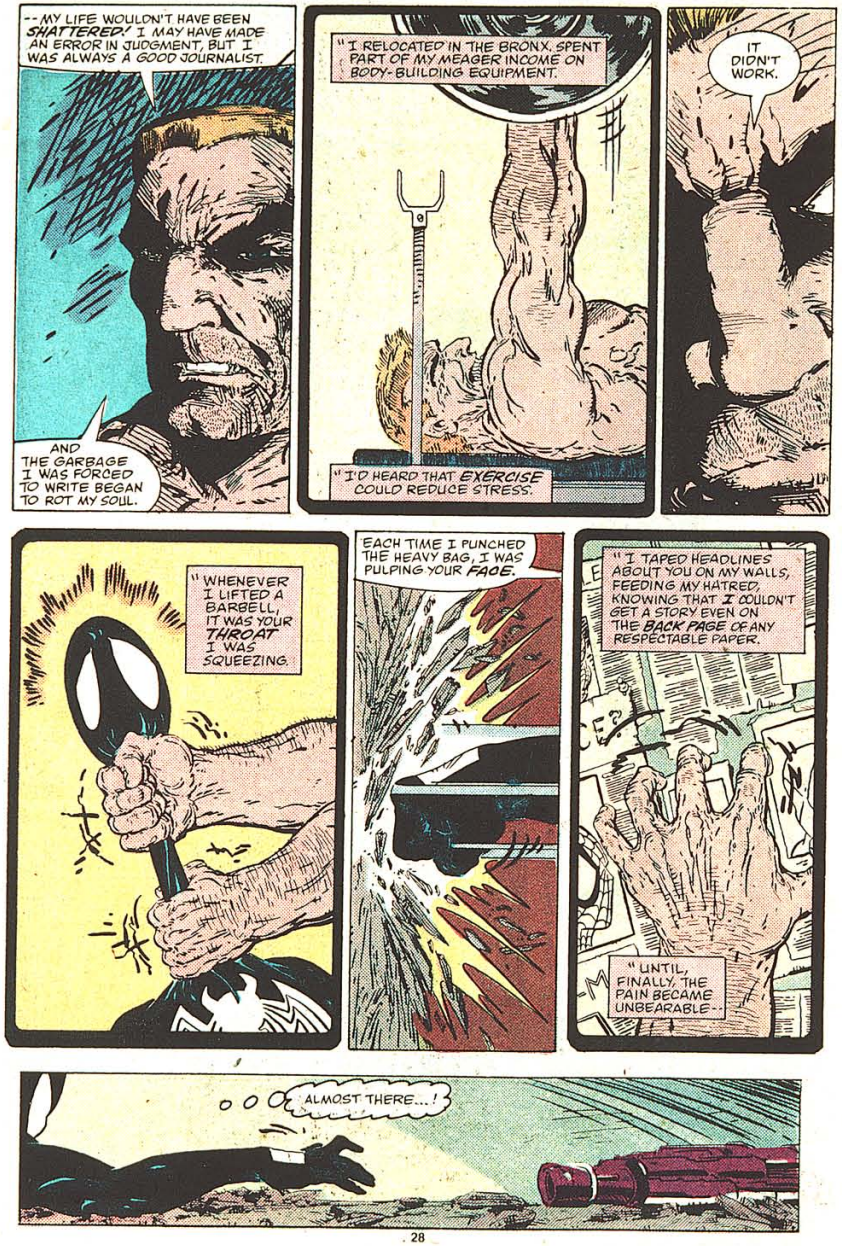

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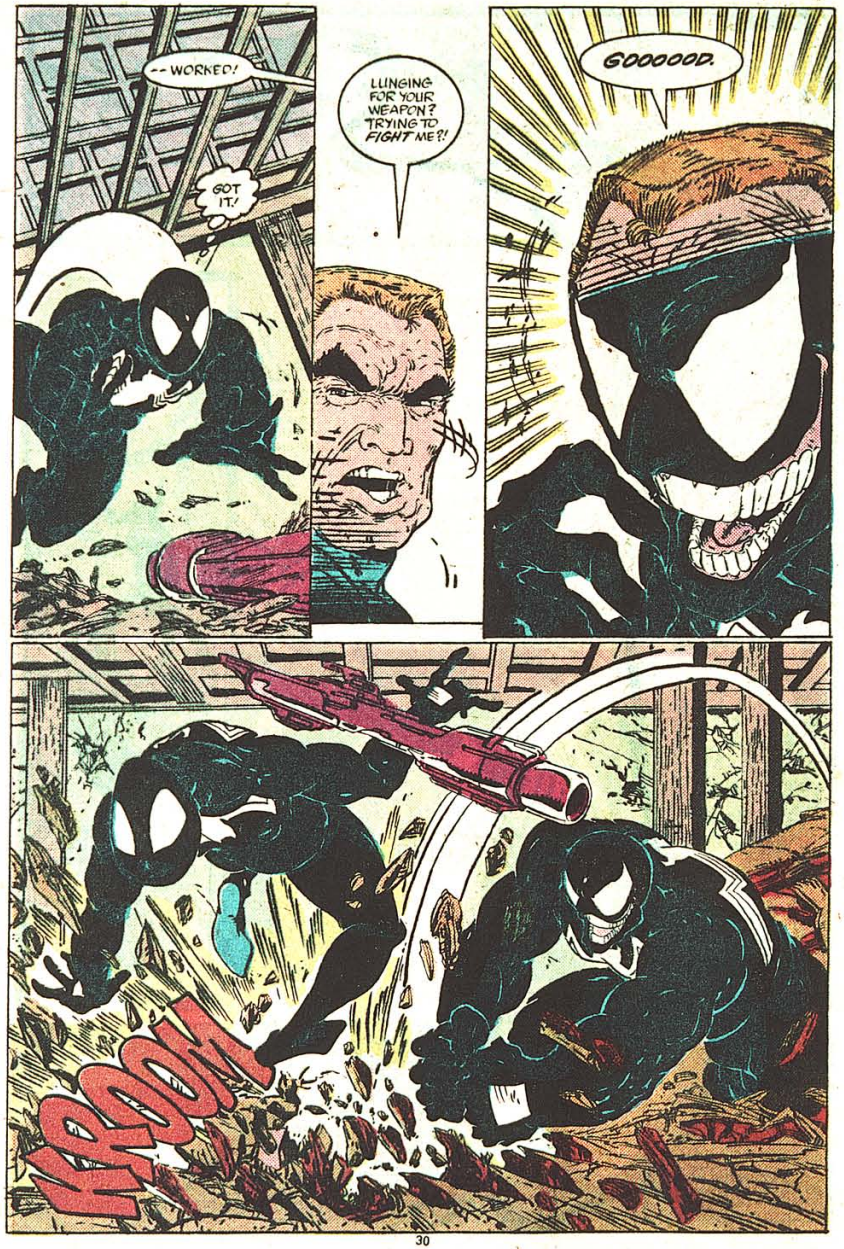

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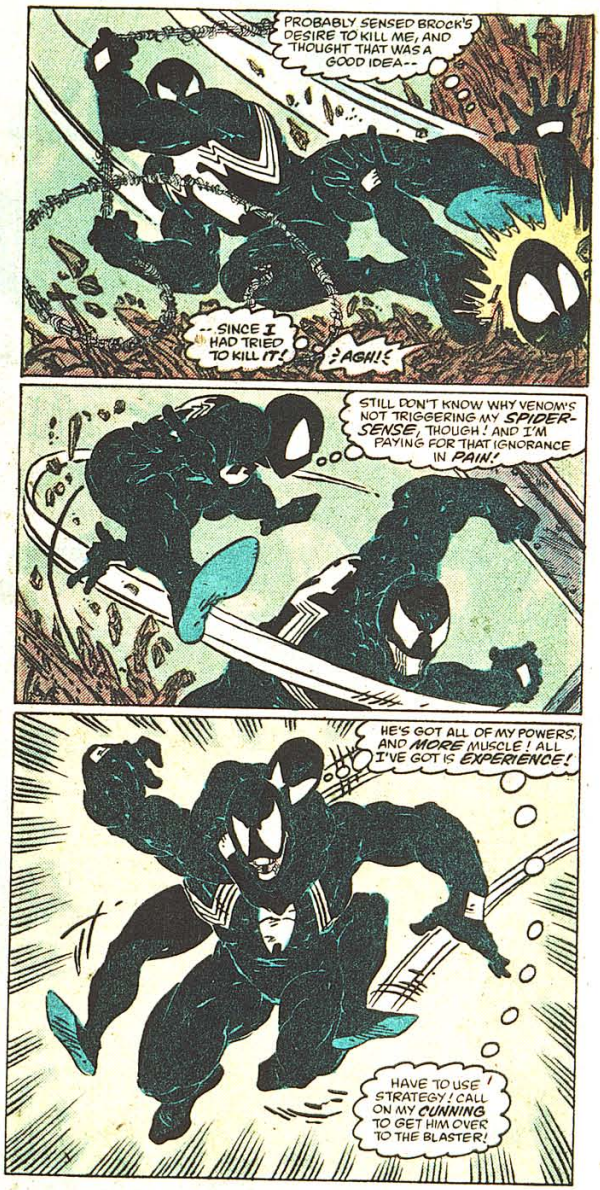

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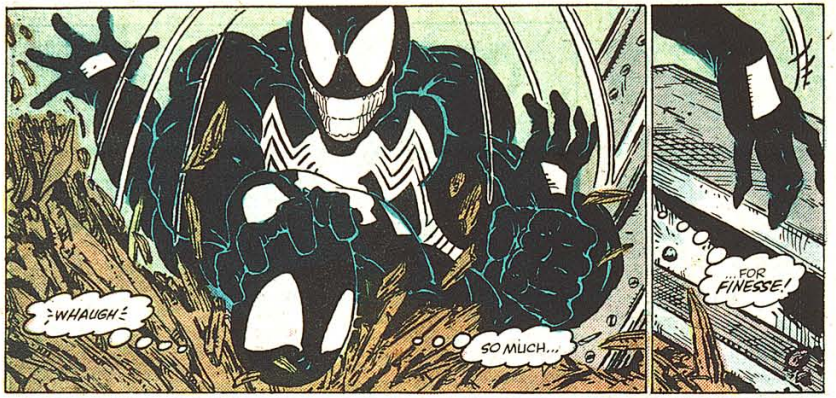

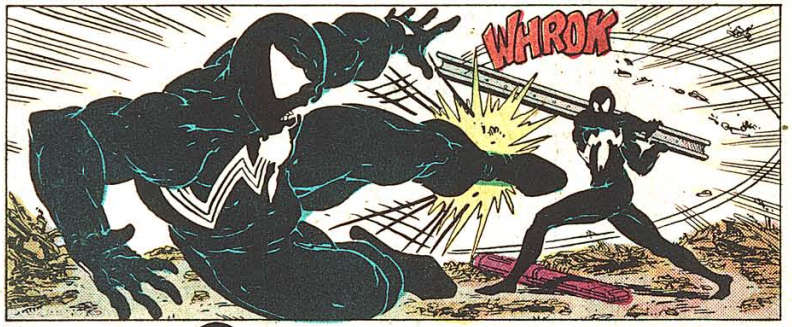

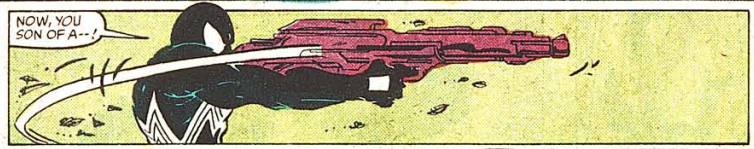

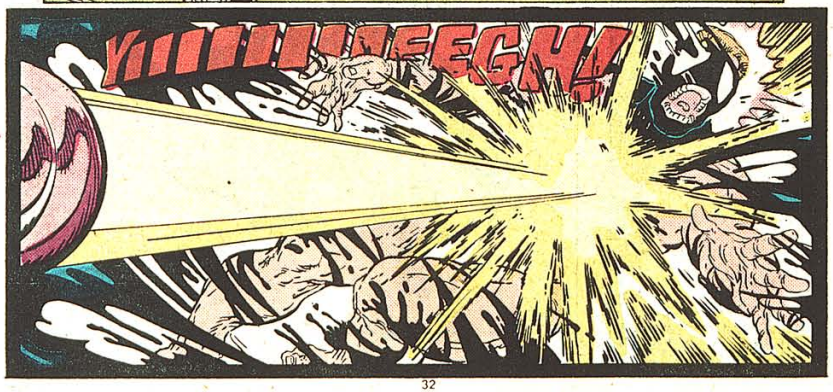

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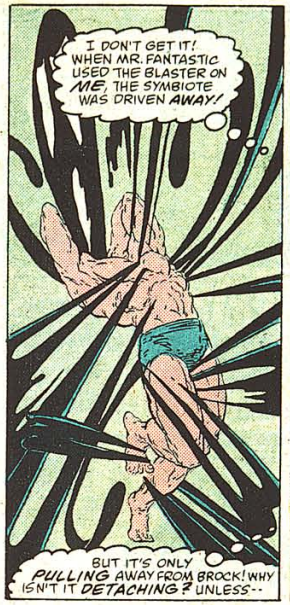

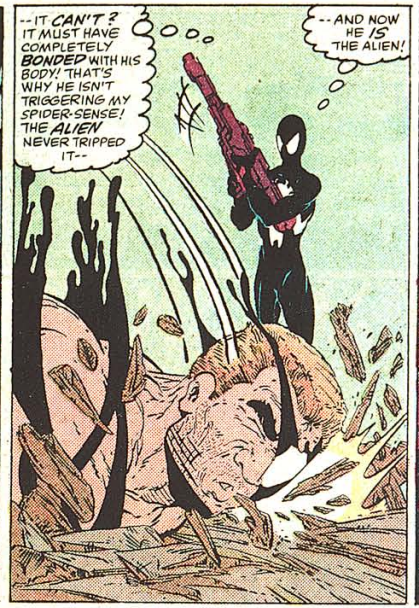

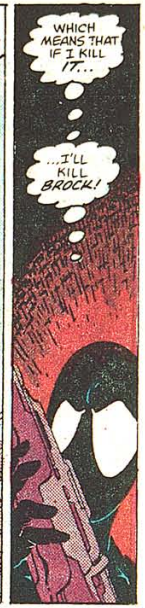

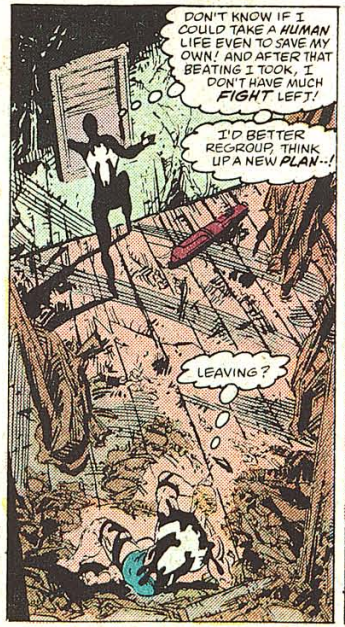

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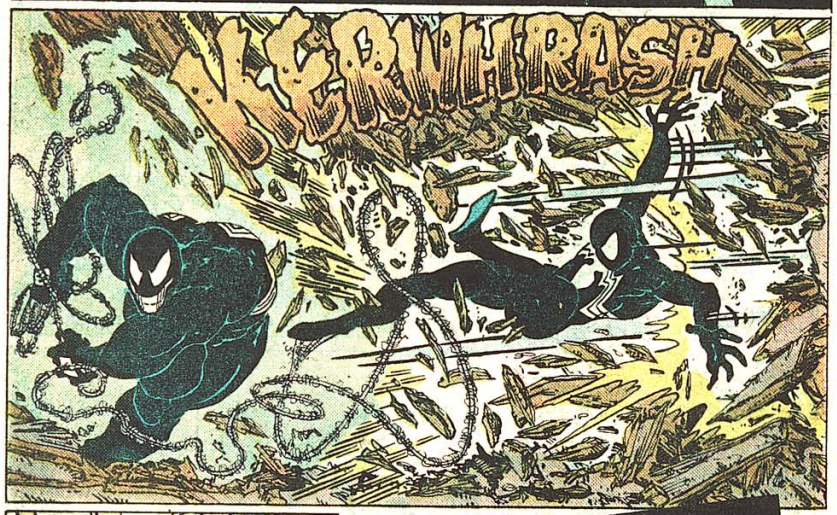

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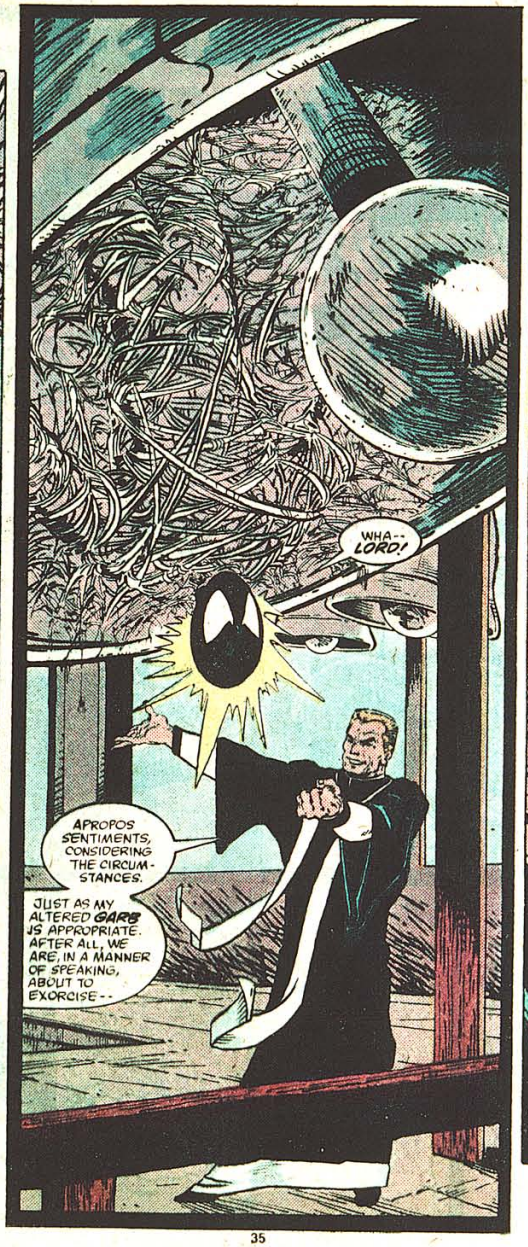

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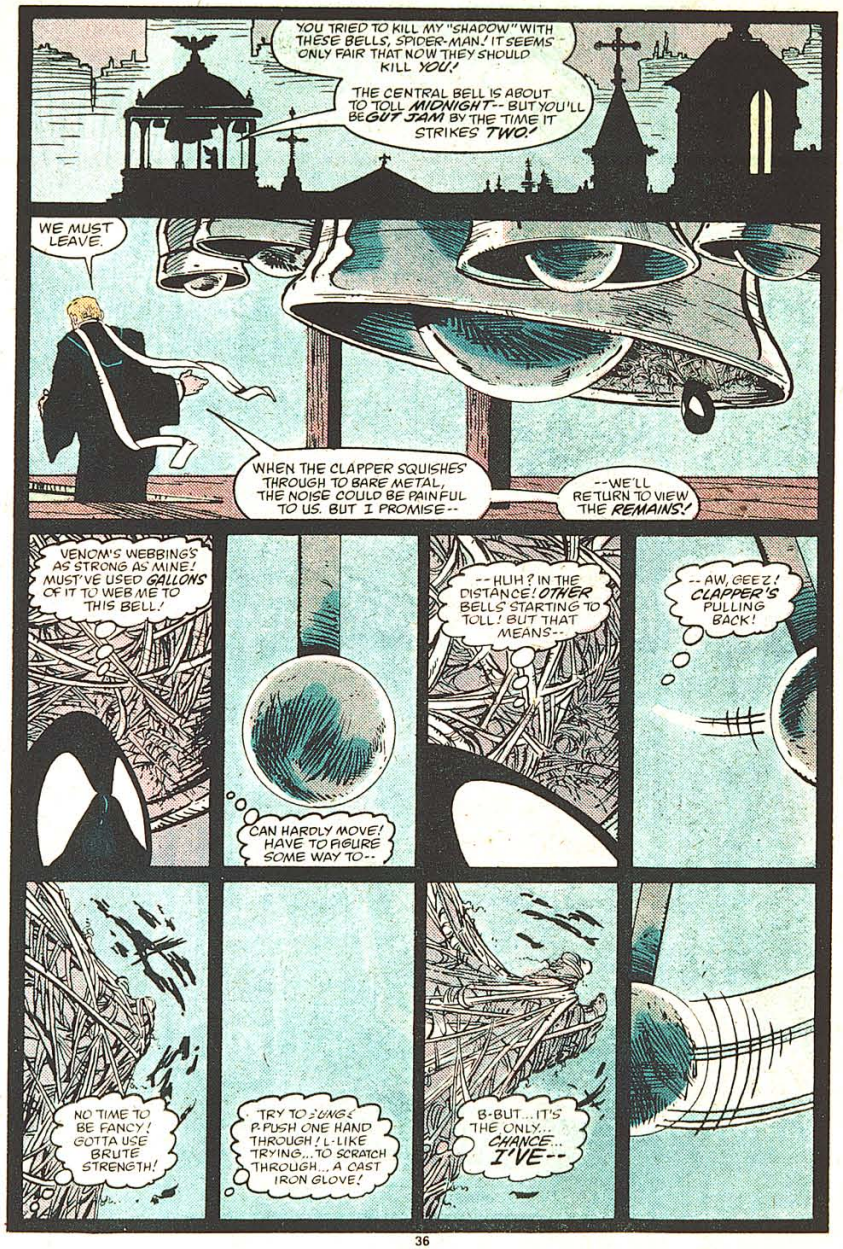

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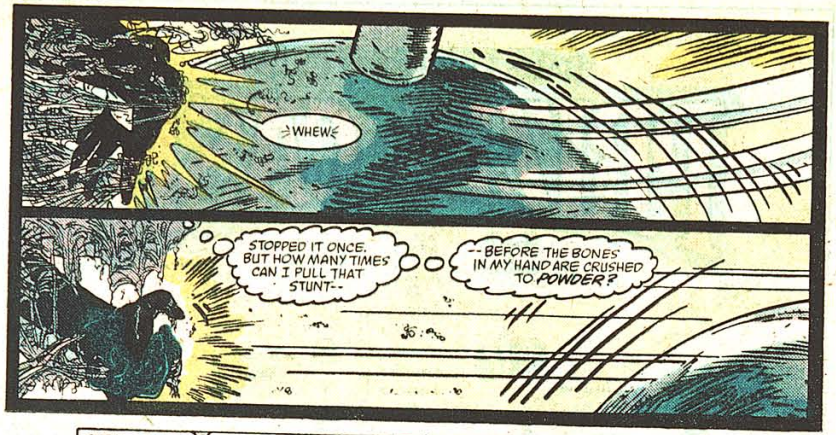

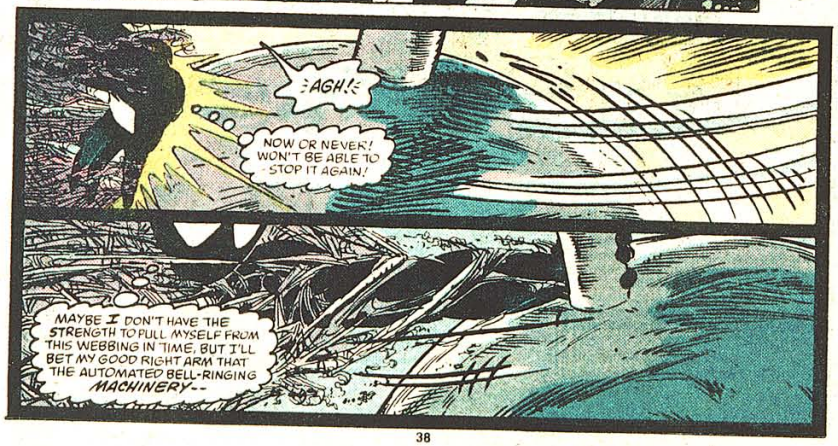

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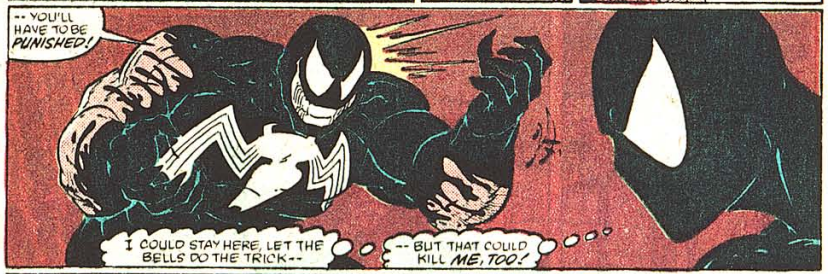

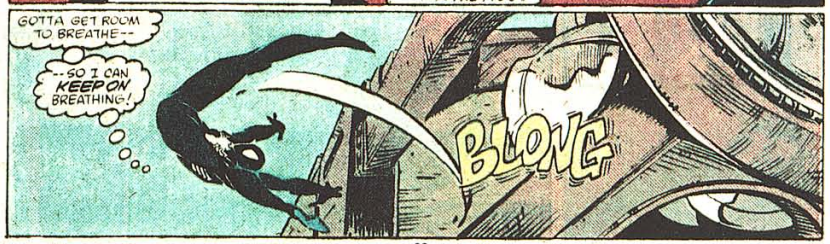

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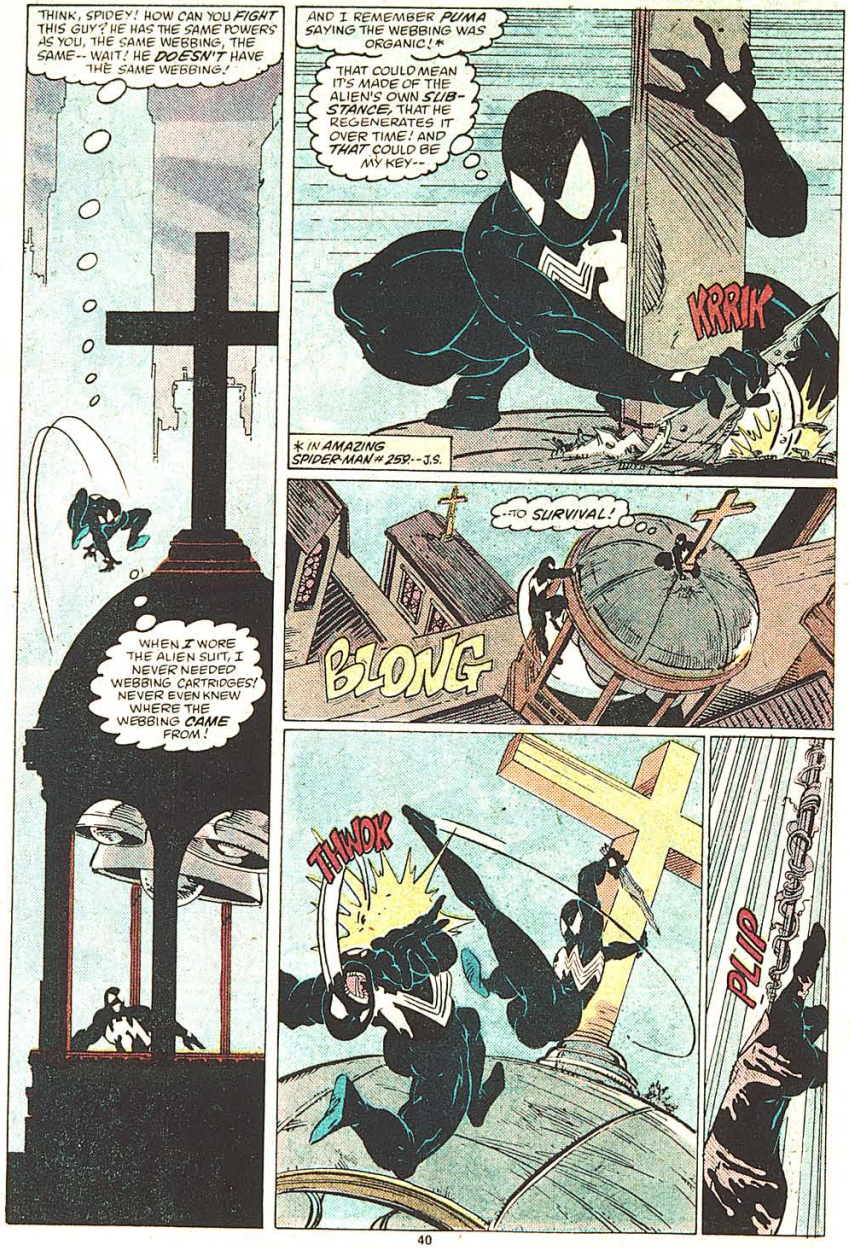

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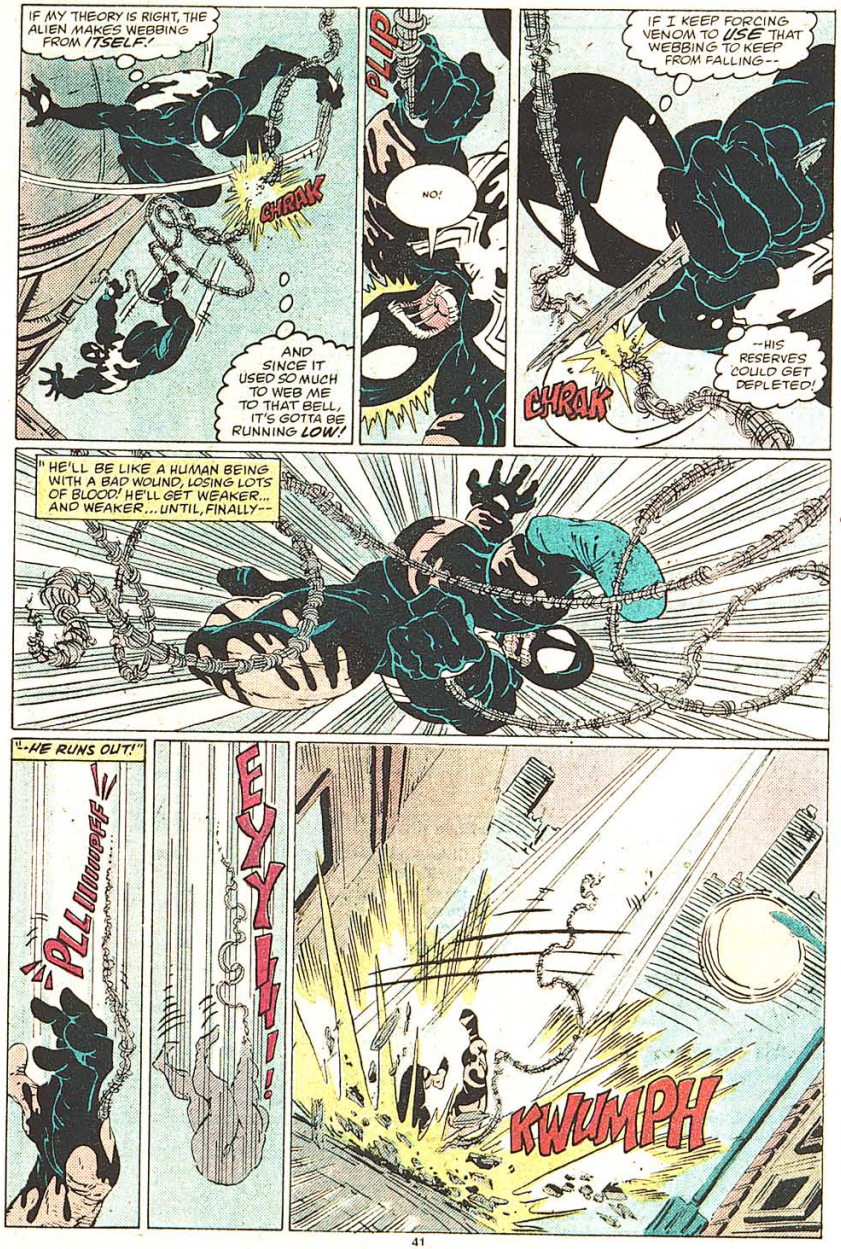

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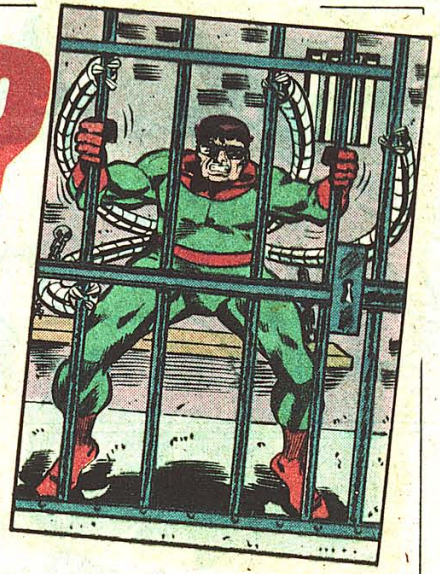

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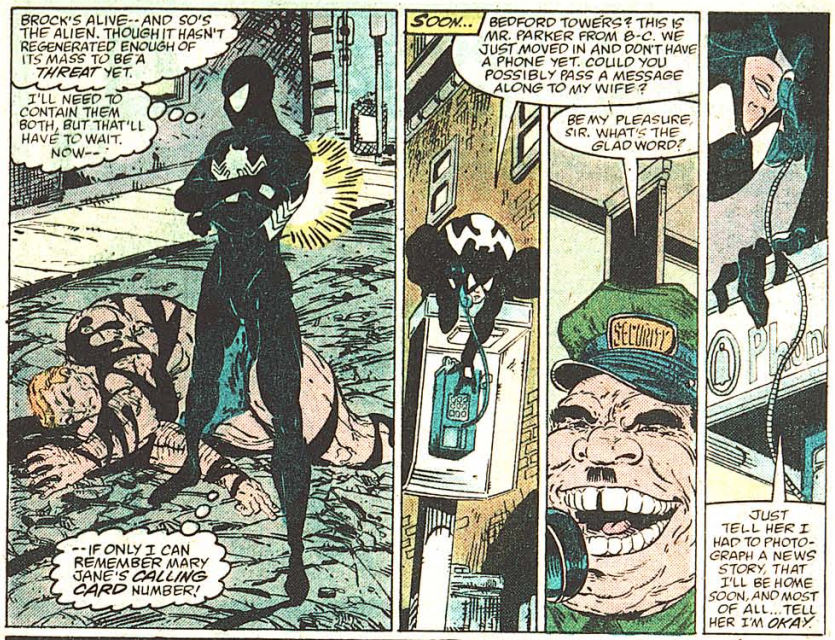

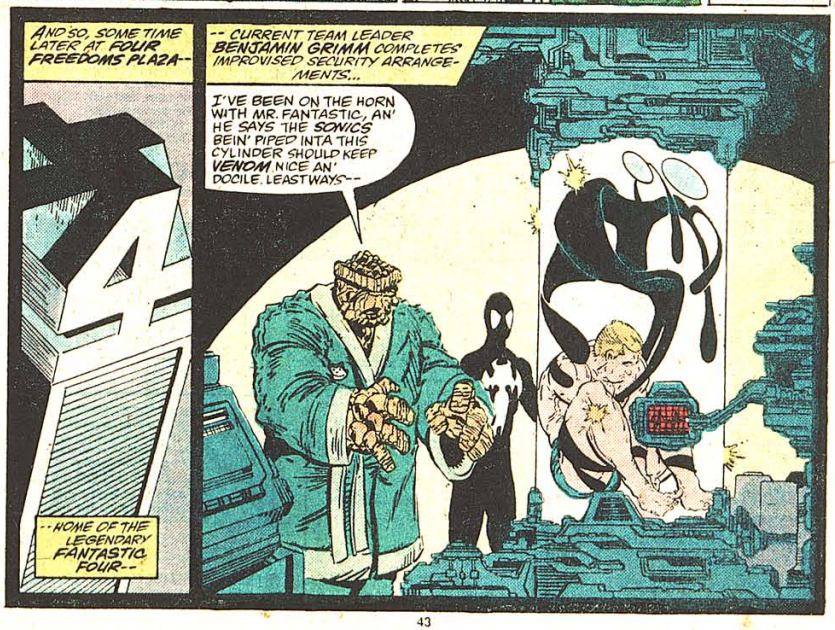

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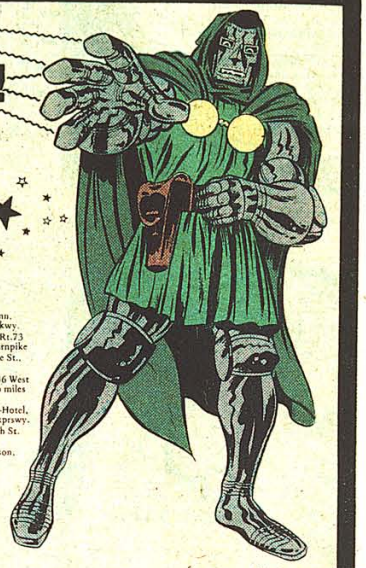

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FEBRUARY 1988

6 SPRINGFIELD, N.J. - Springfield Holiday Inn, 304 Route 22 West - four miles from G.S.Pkwy.
7 MT. LAUREL, N.J. - Budget Motor Lodge, Rt.73 & Fellowship Rd., next to Exit 4 off N.J.Turnpike.
7 STAMFORD, CT. - Stamford Howard Johnson, Exit 6 off I-95.
14 WAYNE, N.J. - Totowa Holiday Inn, Rte. 46 West just 1/4 mile from Exit 55A off Rte.80, two miles east of Willowbrook Mall.
20 PLAINVIEW, N.Y. - Howard Johnson Plaza-Hotel, 150 Sunnyside Blvd., Exit 46 off Long Isl.Exprswy.
21 MANHATTAN, N.Y. - Roosevelt Hotel, 46th St. and Madison Ave.
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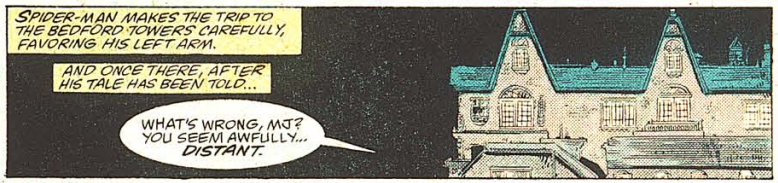

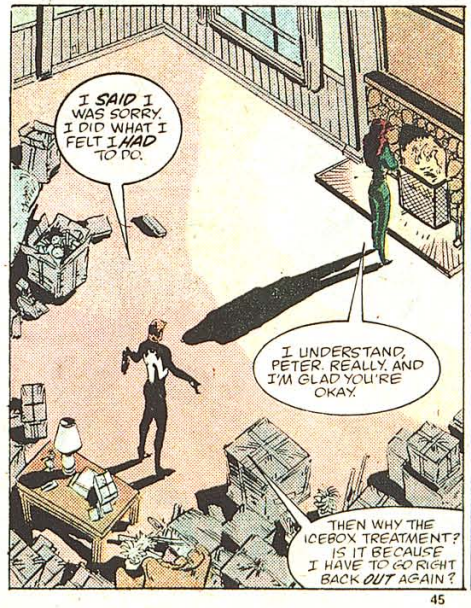

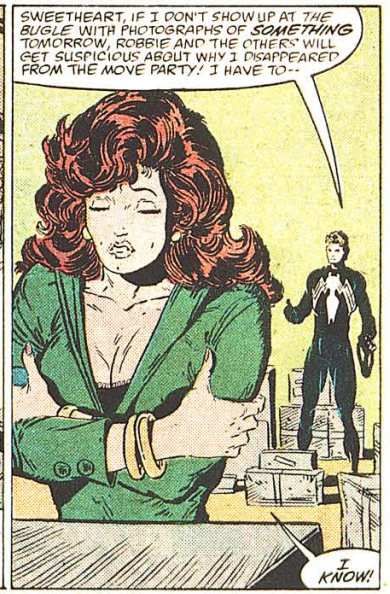

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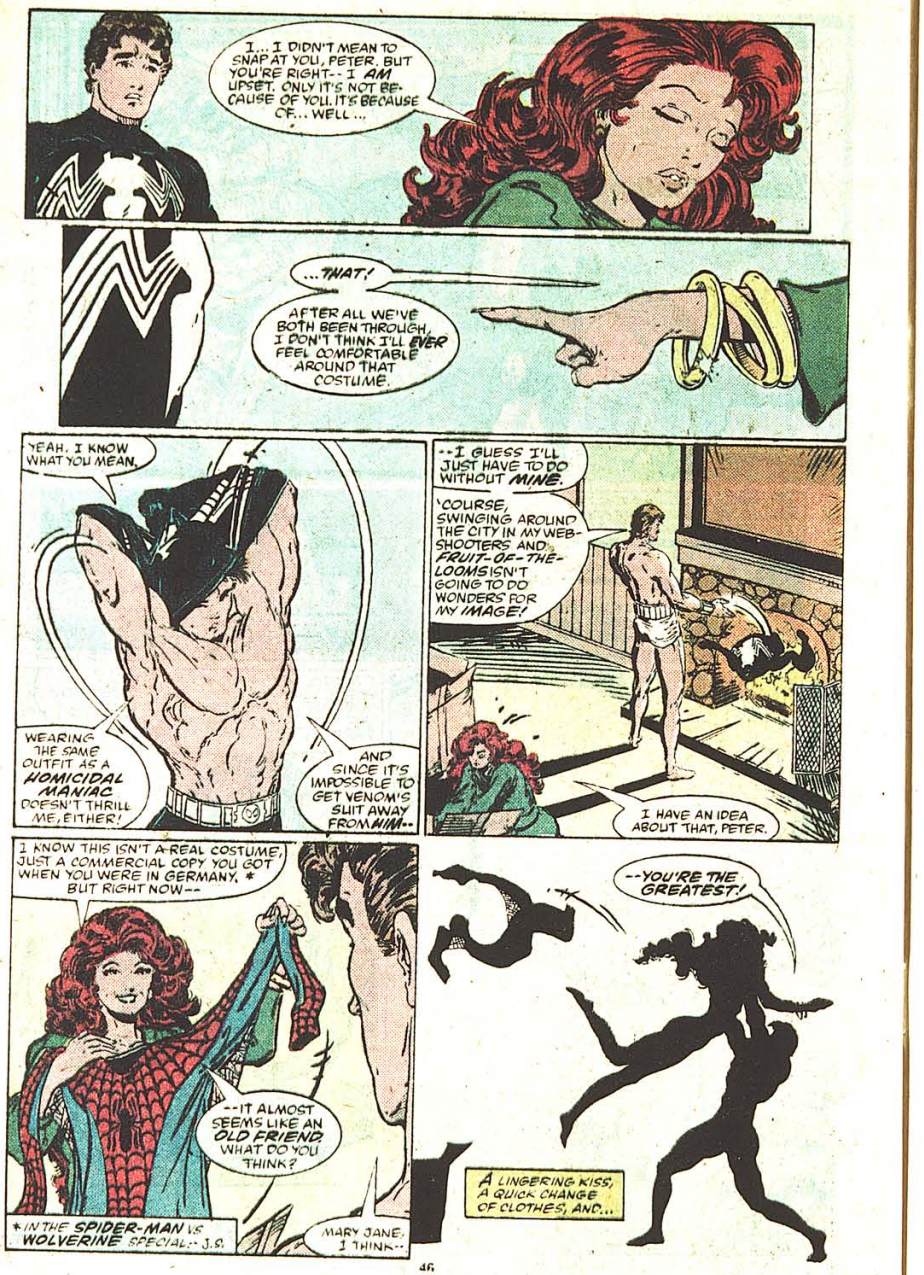

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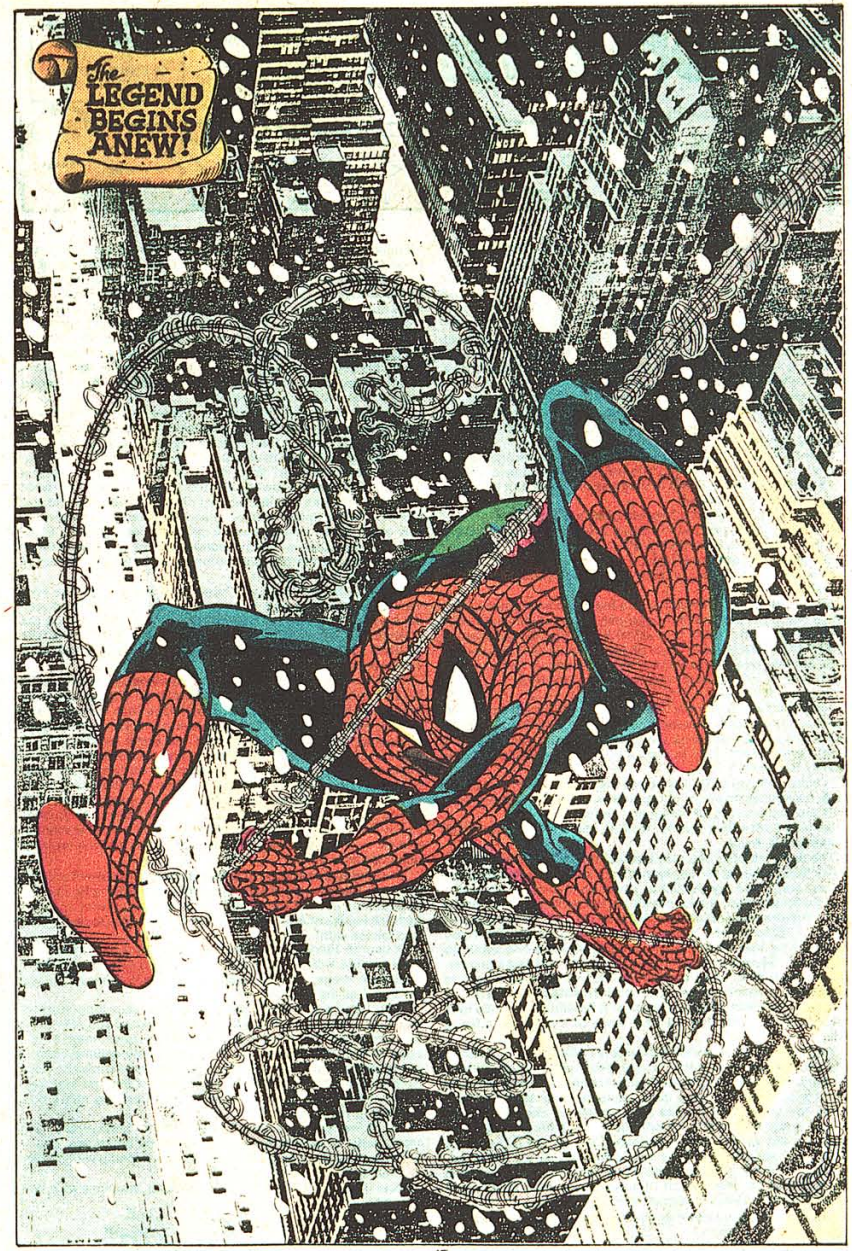

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THE SPIDER'S WEB

MARVEL COMICS GROUP
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JIM SALICRUP
EDITOR
GLENN HERDLING
ASSISTANT EDITOR

STAN'S SOAPBOX SPECIAL!

So there I was, sitting at my computer in the hallowed hills of Hollywood, when all of a sudden the phone rang.

Before picking it up, I immediately lapsed into my favorite fantasy. "It's probably my big chance! Some world-famous movie director heard that I'm here and wants me to play Rhett Butler in the sequel to Gone With the Wind!" Or, "Schwarzenegger isn't available right now and they're calling me because some macho muscleman is needed to take his place!"

Quickly I grabbed the receiver, telling myself not to sound too eager, determined to mellow it out, play it cool.

And then the bubble burst! It wasn't Speilberg, or Lucas, or even Irving Forbush! No, I realized my daydreams had been all in vain when I heard the dulcet tones of Slim-Jim Salicrup suavely saying, "Hey, Stan, hope I didn't wake ya up!"

Now then, knowing that editors are much too frugal (obviously a metaphor for "cheap") to phone long-distance unless they want something, I tried to disguise my voice, but it was no use. Salicrup is relentless!

"Stan, I want something," sayeth he. (Didn't I tell you?)

I immediately replied in my usual gracious and captivating manner, "Forget it, man! I'm busy!"

But then he struck a low blow.

"You want I should cut off your comic book subscription?"

I knew I was beaten!

Never one to take advantage of a foe when he's down, Jim's voice was considerate and tinged with compassion as he murmered, "I need a column for the 300th Anniversary Issue of the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN! A lot of guys can write it better than you, but *they'd* expect to be paid! You I can afford. So I want you to write it!" Who could turn down a tribute like that?

But then, it hit me!

"Hey WAIT a minnit! I don't believe this! You're not gonna tell me that three hundred issues have gone by since Sturdy Stevey Ditko and I first unleashed the wondrous wall-crawler upon a dazed and defenseless human race? I mean, you're talking twenty-five years!"

"I knew I wasn't talking chopped liver," was his clever retort as Jim slammed down the phone and hung up. Everyone knows he's too soft-hearted for sentimental goodbyes.

So here I am with a column to write and a million memories rushing back to me.

The first memory goes 'way back to the early '60s when I was a humble writer-editor (instead of the humble huckster I am today) and I told my publisher I had an idea for a character named Spider-Man. Did he pat me on the back, leap into the air with unrestrained enthusiasm and give me a raise? Not exactly. He said "Spider-Man? What a bone-headed name! Don't you realize, Lee, that no one likes spiders? And no one wants to read about a teenage hero!" (Peter Parker started as a teenager, remember?) Well, I had to bide my time till we were about to suspend publication of a magazine called AMAZING FANTASY. I sneaked Spidey into the last issue of A.F. because nobody ever cares what you put into the final issue of a mag that's being killed.

And the rest is history! As the Library of Congress and scholars everywhere well know, a few years after Steve Ditko's artwork and co-plotting so brilliantly helped us launch the strip and contributed in such a large measure to its towering success, the great John Romita took up the art chores, thereby insuring that Spidey would continue on his path of glory. After that, the list of fabulous illustrators, led by Gil Kane, Ross Andru and John Buscema, is nearly endless. As for the script-writing, I stayed with the woebegone wall-crawler for the first ten years or so, after which I figured it was time to let some other scriveners keep Mr. Parker wiggling his webs.

But I guess I could never completely divorce myself from our friendly neighborhood web-swinger, which is why I've been writing the Spider-Man newspaper strip for the past decade or so — and now that our hero has gotten married, it'll probably go on forever as we get embroiled in all sorts of nutty new situations and cataclysmic complications!

Oh, by the way, if your local newspaper doesn't carry the daily and Sunday Spidey strip, don't be shy. Write the editor an indignant letter telling him he has no right to keep you and your fellow Spidophiles culturally deprived! You'll probably get results! I mean, what editor would dare mess with the outraged hordes of Marveldom Assembled?!!

But what about this historical anniversary issue, which you now hold in your tremblingly grateful fingers? What about all the trouble that writer David Michelinie and artist Todd McFarlane have gone to, just to dream up a great new villian for you to cherish and marvel at? What about Spidey having to battle a fiendish foe whose powers are the same as his? And what about the fact (this is a little secret I'm sharing with you and you alone!) that the Spider-Man costume will become red and blue, now and forever, from this issue on! (Or at least until ol' Slim-Jim or some other innovative editor decides to make another change, thereby mercilessly confusing you, me, and the rest of the comic book universe!)

And now, before I turn you loose once more to pursue your variegated activities and multifarious interests, we can't possibly end this scintillating little session without mentioning the magnificent, majestic, magniloquent MARVEL MASTERWORKS SERIES, ON SALE NOW (you lucky devil!) in beautiful, eye-popping hardcover editions!

Now look, I'll admit they don't come cheap! They're not the kind of books you can buy with some loose change you have laying around. Admittedly, they cost less than a Ferrari, but they're not what you'd call a casual purchase (unless your name happens to be Irving Casual, but that's another story!). However, no serious Marvel fanatic, no enterprising comic book collector, no truly perceptive student of contemporary illustrated literature and sociological currents can afford to be without them! True, you may have to give up a luxury or two, like eating and having a roof over your head, but what a small price to pay for a set of deluxe volumes of marvel's earliest masterpieces — of the stories and illustrations that set the style for generations to come!

The Spider-Man edition of MARVEL MASTERWORKS actually includes the now-legendary AMAZING FANTASY #15, the first appearance ever of the world's favorite wall-crawler, plus the next ten issues of AMAZING SPIDER-MAN for you to read, relish and rejoice with!

Of course, there are also Masterwork editions of *The Fantastic Four* and the *X-Men*, but hey, let 'em do their own sales pitch in their own mags, right? I mean, you bought Spidey, you get Spidey — all the way!

Well, I figure I've bent your pointy little ears long enough. However, if you're a glutton for punishment and you're panting for even more of the same pandemonious prose, latch onto a copy of MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE #63. In my column there, I plan to tell you more than you've ever wanted to know about the Spidey newspaper strip — and to reveal, for the first time anywhere, why in the name of Aunt Petunia I call my merry little monograph a "soapbox"!

So, till we meet again on Spidey's fiftieth anniversary, face front, hang by your thumbs, keep thy webs untangled, and — wherever you go, whatever you do, keep marching with Marvel! We hate to travel alone! 'Nuff said!

(And if there are any cliches I've omitted, catch me next time around!)

Excelsior!

Stan

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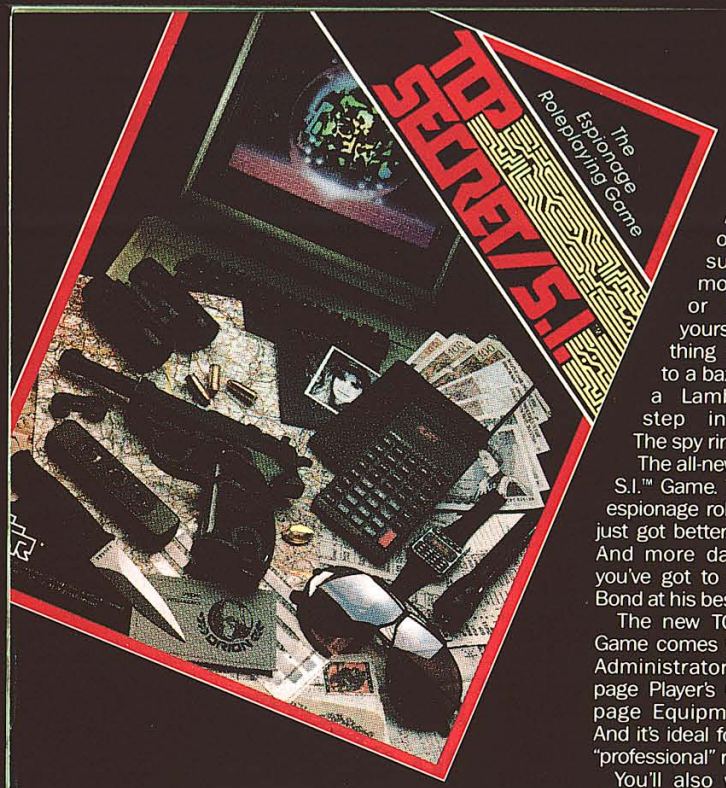

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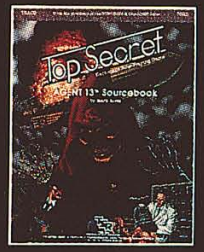

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